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HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY,  
AND CULTURE



# HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND CULTURE

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DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
WILHELM WUNDT  
MASTER OF SOCIAL THEORY



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## *History, Psychology, and Culture*

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### *P R E F A C E*

I AM OFFERING THIS BOOK TO THE PUBLIC WITH MIXED FEELINGS. On the one hand, it represents my cumulative contribution during a score of years to a subject always close to my deepest interest: social theory. On the other, I cannot help sharing the hesitancy of every author who offers revisions of previously published material. It's like serving a reheated meal. Well, does not the Russian proverb say: "To take a chance is a noble affair?" I'll take it!

Readers interested in knowing where each of the essays first appeared will find a statement as to the publications in which they were first printed at the end of the Bibliography (pp. 474-5, Note). The revision has been merciless. Few paragraphs have escaped at least a partial rehandling. Many were omitted, some added. The opening essay, "History, Psychology, and Culture," has at last been "translated into English," as my friend and student Nathaniel Cantor long ago suggested it should be. The new sections are: Part One, II, "The Limitation of Possibilities and Convergence"; Part Three, IV, "A Final Note on Totemism"; Part Six, IV, "The New Education" (a lecture).

Except for Part Six, each part comprises essays related in subject-matter. The reader who will have the courage to read through Part Four will not fail to notice a sudden break in both substance and tone. The essays of Parts Five and Six represent lectures, a class discussion, and an article from a monthly journal—they are less compact in content and more popular in style. The volume as a whole possesses, I fear, no other unity than that implied in the term "social theory" and in being the product of one head.

I want to thank Miss Glenna Fisher, of Portland, and especially Mrs. Jean Riddell, of Eugene, for their faithful labours on the manuscript, and my friend and publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, for undertaking the hazard of the publication.

Alexander Goldenweiser

April 12, 1932  
Portland, Oregon



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# *History, Psychology, and Culture*

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*PART ONE*

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HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY,  
AND CULTURE



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# I

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## History, Psychology, and Culture:

A Set of Categories for an Introduction to Social Science



## History, Psychology, and Culture:

### A Set of Categories for an Introduction to Social Science

THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE EXHIBITS TWO FAMILIAR PROCESSES. On the one hand, certain problems recur again and again. In the course of such repeated consideration old concepts are restated or revised and new ones are introduced. On the other hand, the domain of experience is being constantly subdivided into groups of facts which are being taken care of by one or another special science or branch of science. Just what part of the data of experience thus falls to the share of a science depends on a multiplicity of factors: social conditions, particular historic settings, the emergence of special methods, or even individual idiosyncrasy.

While the two processes noted above are inherent in the circumstances and may thus be expected to recur in the future, these two modes of intellectual approach may at times stand in the way of scientific progress. Thus it might occur, and indeed has often occurred, that problems of fact or interpretation become confused through the emergence of extraneous issues, such as fluctuations in the contents and mutual relations of the special sciences. As a result of this, overlapping may arise between the domains of two or more sciences, leading to distracting variations and discrepancies in the treatment of identical facts. Again, gaps may appear in the treatment, in so far as all of the sciences concerned may for common or disparate reasons shirk the task of attending to certain aspects of the facts. But a still further danger, more serious than either of the two mentioned, lies in the possibility that the theoretical problems involved in the formation of concepts and systems may become confused. In such cases matters of pure terminology are wont to rise into prominence, and, as a consequence, the entire field of investigation acquires that character of indefiniteness and futility so discouraging to constructive research.

These remarks are applicable to the relatively recent developments

in the domains of psychology, sociology, history, and, to a degree, even biology. Discussions of the proper contents and limits of the different sciences have gained undue prominence, leading, as might be expected, to vast differences of opinion. There is no agreement, for instance, as to what is to be regarded as the proper domain and method of history. Is it a science or an art? Is it to record facts or interpret them, or both? Is it part of its province to seek for "laws," or should it leave this to, say, anthropology or sociology? The history of a Johannes Ranke or an Eduard Meyer, with their "*wie es eigentlich gewesen*," their insistence on the individuality of historic events and the importance of "accidents," is not at all like the highly conceptualized and symbolic history of a Karl Lamprecht. This discrepancy in method and ideology is indeed interesting and instructive, but as a basis for acrimonious discussions as to the proper field, method, and purpose of history it becomes futile and distracting. The sociologists are equally prone to argue about the proper content, scope, and limits of their science. Thus, according to some, sociology represents the fundamental theoretical basis of social phenomena; others see in it the sum total of all the social sciences; others, again, regard as its proper domain the investigation of a particular social process: namely, socialization; still others find it difficult to separate sociological thought from the concept of improvement or progress; while at least one leading historian likes to insist on the futility of sociology altogether, holding that the separate social sciences can do well or better what sociology has always done badly. Similarly psychology, after a long career as an analytical science dealing introspectively with the individual, has come to embrace ever-increasing portions of the social field. Lured by the attractive results of experimental technique and statistical rigour, psychology has turned its back on the subjective side of its one-time material, until, in the extreme form of behaviourism, the science of mind is aspiring to reach higher rank as a science by denying the relevancy of mind as such, while only grudgingly accepting its very existence.

Such being the situation, it seems hazardous to venture a discussion of our subject — the relations of history, psychology, and culture — on the basis of the confused notions as to the content, scope, and method of the social and mental sciences. Instead it might prove illuminating to turn to the facts themselves and, disregarding the differentiations of the special sciences, to attempt an analysis of such facts in the light of certain comprehensive concepts.

*Derivation of the Categories.* — An examination of a set of social facts or events, as presented by the historic record or by modern conditions, may suggest three questions: What kind of facts are they? How are they interrelated in time? And how are they otherwise connected? The facts then are envisaged from three standpoints: the standpoint of *level*, resulting in two sets of data, objective and psychological; the standpoint of *time*, giving another two sets, successive (or historical, in the narrow sense) and contemporaneous (or coexistential) data; the standpoint of connexion or *linkage*, finally, revealing the data as deterministic or accidental. In tabular form:

Level	{ objective psychological
Time	{ historical (successive) contemporaneous (coexistential)
Linkage	{ deterministic accidental

All of these terms allow of multiple interpretation and have been used with varying connotations in different sciences or even by different writers. For the purposes of the following discussion the terms may be defined as follows:

Objective = external (non-psychological), describable in terms of outward behaviour.

Psychological = in the psychic level, referring to processes which occur in minds (whether the individual or the social aspect is stressed is in this context irrelevant). *N.B.* "Psychological" does *not* mean "amenable to the methods of the science of psychology," or anything else of that sort.

Historical = chronologically successive.

Contemporaneous = chronologically coexistential.

Before the last two concepts, "deterministic" and "accidental," can be defined, a subsidiary concept must be introduced, that of a *system*. In a cosmic sense every event, whether physical, psychic, or social, is absolutely determined; its character and the time and place of its occurrence are inevitably fixed by the immediately antecedent events. In a cosmic sense, then, no event is accidental (undetermined or only partially determined). Every event, moreover, is in innumerable ways linked with all contemporaneous and all antecedent events.



Such is the familiar creed of our positive or naturalistic philosophy: permit one event to run amuck, and the entire universe runs with it.<sup>1</sup>

A radically different attitude must be assumed when any particular facts or events are being examined from the standpoint of their connexion or linkage. Even when the events in question belong to the physical order, we have long been accustomed to disregard certain of their connexions. If the connexions do not count in relation to the nexus of events under examination (the system), we disregard them; they are not significant. The following may serve as an illustration:

I drop my pen. The resulting vibrations are communicated through the table to the floor, the walls, the earth. They reach Europe and are imparted to a French gun which at that moment is being fired at a German target. The aim of the gun is changed, and the projectile will hit the target at a spot removed by an infinitesimal fraction of an inch from that which would have been hit had the vibrations not taken place, had the pen not been dropped. Now, if we are concerned with the system gun—aim—shot—hit—explosion—damage-to-target, we shall completely disregard the vibrations resulting from the dropping of the pen; their effect, while real, is not merely of slight significance, but of no significance whatsoever. Supposing, on the other hand, that the shocks accompanying the discharge of the German Big Bertha bombarding Paris from a distance of seventy-five miles have been registered by the seismographs in the United States in the form of exceedingly small dots. Now, if we are examining the extent of the measurable vibrations caused by the detonation of a monster gun, or the delicacy of the seismographic instruments, or the relations of the vibrations thus caused to those resulting from a distant earthquake, then these vibrations, however minute, are not only real but, within the limits of the system, also significant, not relatively, but absolutely so, as significant as any other measurable effect of the distant detonations.<sup>2</sup>

This concept of a *system* is essential for a proper estimate of the deterministic and accidental factors in the historic process. From a cosmic standpoint, as we saw, a historic event is no less irrevocably determined as to content, place, and time than any other kind of event, nor is any event accidental. But if the interest centres on a particular

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<sup>1</sup> I am aware that other cosmic philosophies are conceivable and have, in fact, been propounded, philosophies of which the concept of accident constitutes an integral part. Such philosophical alternatives are irrelevant to my argument and need not be considered here.

<sup>2</sup> These lines were first penned in the last months of 1914.

historic complex of events, with its own system of specially intimate relations between its elements, then, within the limits of such a system, certain determinisms may also be observed. In the domain of historic phenomena such determinisms are, as will be shown, never absolute, but relative or limited. These determinisms are really tendencies the particular aspects of which are co-determined by things or events having their origin in other systems. The intrusion of such extraneously conditioned events or things into the first system must, from the point of view of that system, be regarded as accidental.

In the light of the preceding remarks, the two remaining terms can be defined:

**Deterministic** = more or less definitely determined within a relatively closed system of historic (or cultural) relations. The term as used has no relation to any philosophical view of the universe.

**Accidental** = coming into a system, *a*, from without, from another system, *b*; hence, from the point of view of system *a*, relatively undetermined and unforeseeable. The term, like the preceding one, has no wider philosophical implications, nor does it mean "uncaused."

Returning now to the six concepts grouped into pairs from the standpoints of level, time, and linkage, it will be observed that a historical and a contemporaneous series are distinguishable in the objective and the psychological levels, as well as in the deterministic and the accidental forms of linkage. The resulting eight categories represent angles of vision or points of view for cultural or historical analyses. The categories are:

1. Objective-Historical
2. Objective-Contemporaneous
3. Psychological-Historical
4. Psychological-Contemporaneous
5. Deterministic-Historical
6. Deterministic-Contemporaneous
7. Accidental-Historical
8. Accidental-Contemporaneous.

Some illustrative and explanatory comments will now be made on each of the above categories.

*Objective-Historical Category.* — This is history in the narrow sense, the description or reconstruction of a successive series of past events. The limiting conception of history in this level would be a complete cinematographic and synchronous phonographic record of the

past. The consistent social behaviourist would have to be satisfied with such a record and build his science of society upon it. But, fortunately, no such consistently behaviouristic sociologist or historian has as yet made his appearance. As a rule, either a ray of psychological insight is permitted to shed its clarifying light upon the non-committal array of behaviouristic fact; or behaviourism is redefined so as to include more or less of the content of the older socio-psychological material. However that may be, the limitations of the purely objective view with reference to the successive series of events appear most clearly in the work of those who have most enthusiastically embraced the standpoint of historical behaviourism. They have, moreover, never lived up to their thesis. Eduard Meyer's historic sense has constantly carried him beyond the purely objective narrative he so insistently advocates. As to Ranke, his "*wie es eigentlich gewesen*" is scarcely ever just that, but mostly a somewhat subjective account with occasional intuitive flashes of interpretation. Graebner, the ethnologist, has gone as far as anyone in his advocacy of a purely objective reconstruction of the past, but, as his critics had no difficulty in showing, his method is really most subjective. He deals, moreover, largely with the distribution of objects of material culture to which behaviourism is most applicable, although even here not without distinct reservations.

The objective-successive series of data certainly constitutes a distinct level in the historical record, a level of special importance for a theory of culture and of institutionalism; <sup>1</sup> but it is no less patent that even the most complete reconstruction, if comprising solely objective, external, behaviouristic data, could at most constitute but the beginning, not the end, of our knowledge of the past. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those who insist on the social being a phenomenon *sui generis*, and on culture being in its nature historical, base their opinion on a real fact. While the content of culture, in so far as it counts, lies in the psychological level and can only be understood and interpreted through the attitudes and tendencies in that level, it cannot be derived from it or from the attitudes and tendencies embedded in it. A psychological interpretation of a culture can explain its content (explanation here standing for interpretative description), but it cannot account for it. This is a corollary of the fact that the cultural content is a heritage of the past, and that it is cumulative. This cumulation is a historical and objective phenomenon.

<sup>2</sup> This theoretical standpoint can be given the following drastic formulation: Suppose the objective historic past were laid bare; it would then present no more than the material for the study of history (in the wider sense) and of culture. From the standpoint of methodology, however, the case for the objective record, especially in the domain of ethnology, stands much worse than is here hypothetically assumed as possible. We know that this record is full of gaps which can only be filled by more or less speculative reconstruction, while the ethnological or cultural perspective for such reconstructions can only be achieved through the study of existing cultures in their totality—that is, including the interpretative illumination derived from the psychological level. Not to have realized this is perhaps Graebner's chief methodological error (see his *Methode der Ethnologie*).

*Objective-Contemporaneous Category.* — It comprises an objective series of coexistential facts and events. Any non-psychological record of pure enumeration, classification, representation, belongs to this category, such as a Who's Who, a city directory, a census, catalogues, photographs, maps, archives, codes, etc. The static series is supplemented by a dynamic series, which tells us what people do, what are their occupations, gatherings, feasts, ceremonies, lynchings, congresses, investigations, commissions, legal litigations. If a satisfactory record is desired here, it will prove difficult to remain in the level of the purely objective. The domain of facts comprised in the above series, one static, one dynamic, will readily be recognized as the province of statistics. The lure of mathematical representation, with its highly creditable scientific pedigree, has doubtless had a great deal to do with the persistent efforts to eliminate the psychological categories from the social field and thus, through the application of statistics, to elevate the study of society to a science. It is, however, a fact too well recognized to require specific illustration that statistics, on its objective and mathematical side, presents at best but a rearrangement of the facts. The facts thus marshalled cannot in themselves provide a solution to any social problem; rather do they *constitute* a problem. The most signal merit of statistics, in fact, consists perhaps in the very aptitude of that method to bring to the surface problems which otherwise might never be recognized. But the solutions of such problems can only be reached within the level to which the facts themselves belong, and must be undertaken by the corresponding sciences, biology, psychology, sociology. There is thus good common sense in the popular saying that statistics can be made to prove anything, implying that it is the interpretation of the statistical material that counts, and that if the interpretation is arbitrary, the mathematical garb of the data is no guarantee of truth.

In the field of ethnology Graebner has repeatedly made use of the objective-contemporaneous category in the stiff catalogues of cultural objects and processes which, like dismembered bodies without joints or souls, constitute his culture areas.<sup>1</sup> Clark Wissler, on the other hand, in his works on the culture of the Plains Indians, has illustrated convincingly the importance of the interrelations and interpenetrations of culture traits for an adequate characterization of an area. This achievement is the more conspicuous as the author, in a later

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 83.

work of a more ambitious character,<sup>1</sup> returns to the catalogue method of culture depiction, with the inevitable accompaniment of a hollow Graebnerian twang.

*Psychological-Historical Category.* — Perhaps no other aspect of culture has received so much attention from students of history, culture historians, sociologists, and anthropologists as the successive series in the psychological level.

In the course of recent discussions of cultural diffusion the psychological setting has come in for its share of analysis. The mere statement that an object, belief, or institution has travelled from one tribe or nation to another gives but an inkling of what has occurred. The method of diffusion, the degree and rapidity of assimilation, are problems which inevitably introduce the psychological factor. When W. H. R. Rivers rightly observes that the very fact of contact between two cultures tends to engender features new to both, he puts his finger on a psychological element. When Paul Radin in his analysis of the peyote cult of the Winnebago Indians points out how certain elements of Christian teaching and ritual were taken over whole, without undergoing much transformation, how certain other elements from the same source were changed beyond recognition through the reaction of the Indian ritualistic milieu, how still other Christian elements precipitated constructive shifts in Indian rite and dogma, the author deals with psychological factors. The entire domain of culture history proper belongs here. Every attempt to reconstruct the history of art, literature, religion, philosophy, science, social movements, must largely deal with facts belonging to this category. The volumes of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* as well as his *Elemente* (the latter perhaps contrary to his own intention) contain hosts of suggestive analyses of the historical-psychological series. Clearly, also, the very basic principles underlying Wundt's conception of the psychic and the social belong here. I mean the principle of the "heterogeny of ends" and that of the "mutation of motives," which are but aspects of the wider principle of "creative synthesis."<sup>2</sup> While this author must be given credit for an incisive formulation and systematic elaboration of the above principles, the idea of the transvaluation of psychic values in history, in its wider aspects, anteceded Wundt and persists without bear-

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<sup>1</sup> *The American Indian.*

<sup>2</sup> See p. 78.

ing to any marked degree the stamp of the master's influence. Illustrations in abundance could be gleaned from a review of the psychological connotations assumed in the course of the last few centuries by such concepts as kingship, liberty, labour, riches, drama, learning, heresy, efficiency, asceticism, purity, heroism.

In the domain of ethnology the concept of convergence largely refers to facts of the psychological-historical category. We speak of convergence when two or more developmental processes starting from distinct origins and pursuing somewhat disparate paths culminate in cultural features or processes which are highly similar. Although the concept of convergence may also be applied to purely material processes, such as techniques, where the psychological factors may be elusive or absent, by far the more useful and significant application of the concept implies factors of the psychological-historical category, where the similarities in the final stages of the developmental processes are brought about through either a gradual or a more or less sudden transvaluation of psychic values.<sup>1</sup>

It may be submitted without reservation that any valid interpretation of the historic process must heed the facts of the psychological-historical category.

*Psychological-Contemporaneous Category.* — Any characterization of a culture based on pure enumeration of objective features must be artificial and incomplete, as has been noted before. In reality the different aspects or features of a culture are interrelated. The level of these interrelations is psychological or psycho-sociological; what else, indeed, should it be? As is generally recognized — except, perhaps, by the extreme behaviourist — it is the links between the different traits of a culture that constitute it an organic integer rather than a mere aggregate of disparate traits. The concept of the so-called "cultural setting" belongs to this category. With reference to any particular culture the content of the concept is a fluctuating one. Any trait may be placed in the centre of attention. With reference to that trait the rest of the culture will then appear as an interpretative setting, the traits most intimately related to the central one standing in the foreground and practically determining its cultural orientation, while the other, less relevant traits remain relatively in the background, constituting a cultural fringe. When another trait is of major interest, the cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. below, "The Limitation of Possibilities and Convergence," pp. 45 sqq.

setting will differ, to some extent; but it always belongs to the psychological-coexistential level.

Again, every complex culture, and to some extent *any* culture, comprises several cultural subgroups, with a varying number of individuals. As a carrier of the culture each subgroup is deeply saturated with certain cultural features, is superficially coloured by some others, and remains wholly out of touch with still others. In all cultures of great complexity, in the ancient world, for example, or in modern society, any particular cultural subgroup intimately represents no more than a fraction of the available cultural wealth and remains partly or even wholly outside of other cultural features which, to some other subgroup, may be of prime importance. This is, of course, the result of the presence of economic and social classes, hereditary groups of wealth, privilege, or occupation, division of labour, and technical and professional specialization. If Lévy-Bruhl's concept of "participation" were applied here, every culture could be represented by a set of mutually overlapping cycles of cultural participation. The links holding together the elements of a cycle as well as the links between interrelated cycles would fall into the psychological-coexistential level.

What we call the knowledge or understanding of a culture belongs here. With reference to historic civilizations, particularly the modern ones, our understanding along psychological lines is of a high order, justifying even prediction, although perhaps not to the degree often too lightly assumed. In the case of primitive cultures, on the other hand, our penetration is slight, on account of the paucity of relevant psychological material, such as only prolonged residence combined with a thorough familiarity with the local language would make possible. How many ethnologists, for example, would undertake to specify a phrase or situation which would pass as humorous, as a joke, in a particular primitive community? In some instances such insight has been achieved — for example by Malinowski among his Trobrianders — but cases like his are exceptional.

Two kinds of interpretations belonging to the psychological-coexistential category have at times been confused. I mean, on the one hand, what we have discussed as the "cultural setting," and, on the other, what is known among ethnologists as "secondary explanations." The "cultural setting," as we saw, represents the psychological rationale of a culture, the expression in psychological or psycho-sociological terms of the more or less intimate interrelations of the features or aspects of a culture. "Secondary explanations" are attempts, usually unconscious,

on the part of the members of a group to furnish offhand psychological or even historical interpretations of various features in their own culture. Such "explanations" present a cultural interest of their own, in so far as they may throw interesting sidelights on the psychological attitudes of the group; but as interpretations, psychological or historical, of the cultural features to which they refer, "secondary explanations" are both false and vicious. The psychology here employed is likely to be of the naïve popular variety, whereas the historic references are usually fictitious. Thus when we are told that people do not eat off a knife for fear of cutting themselves, or when mothers assert that they spank their children for the latter's benefit, the history in the first instance is as vicious as the psychology in the second. The social behaviourist in his more savage than discriminating attacks on the psychosociological interpreter of culture has often confused the illuminating interpretations through "cultural setting" with the misleading psychological and historical vagaries of "secondary explanations."

*Deterministic-Historical Category.* — This approach to culture has been marred by a great deal of discussion, controversy, and philosophical speculation. It has also been the worst understood. The evolutionary formulations of a Herbert Spencer were based on an implicit faith in a rigid historical determinism. In Spencer's presentation this determinism takes the form of a quasi-organic principle of cultural development, for ever and everywhere the same. While the cast-iron system of the philosopher of evolution has been rudely shaken both in its specific allegations and in its fundamental postulates,<sup>1</sup> the faith in historic uniformities persists, and with it the tendency to formulate historical laws. Kurt Breysig's "laws" of history are typical of many other attempts. In all such systems the discrepancies between historic processes are placed on a different theoretical plane from the uniformities. Either the discrepancies are overlooked, thus involving a misrepresentation of the facts, or they are regarded as somehow less real or less "deep" than the uniformities, or they are brushed aside as "disturbing agencies." That this last attitude, when moderately applied, contains a measure of truth will appear in the sequel.

The relevant theoretical and methodological problems have been attacked with critical insight by a number of historians and philosophers. Some of these, such as Wilhelm Dilthey, Heinrich Rickert, and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 130 sqq.



Eduard Meyer, have reached the conclusion that a radical difference obtains between the natural and the historical sciences. Whereas the former operate with uniformities and regularities which can be formulated into "laws," the latter must dispense with any such conceptual simplification. Historical events are too complex, it is alleged; the interest of the historian as such, moreover, is irrevocably centred in the individual and unique.<sup>1</sup> Other thinkers, admitting the "uniqueness" of historic events, claim with Wilhelm Wundt that while the concept of "law" is not applicable to history, certain stabilizing trends may be discerned in the successive series, which can be formulated as "principles" of more or less wide application.<sup>2</sup>

An analytical separation of the deterministic and accidental aspects of history will, I believe, serve to illumine both concepts. Meanwhile, however, we must keep in mind that the concept "determinism," as here understood, will always be relative to the concept of a "system" of preferential relations.

An examination of the deterministic series reveals the presence of a number of factors which fall into several groups, such as: logical, mechanical, psychological, socio-psychological, and still another group of factors not readily definable by a term, which are comprised in the concept of "limitation of possibilities."

Logical determinism can be exemplified by the history of mathematics. The discovery of analytical geometry by Descartes made possible a practically endless series of further discoveries and applications (which, essentially, are also discoveries), including the differential calculus. When that discovery was made by Newton and Leibnitz, mathematics came into possession of a tool so powerful and far-reach-

<sup>1</sup> According to Eduard Meyer: "Historical development takes a different form in each individual instance; it knows no laws and cannot know them" (*Geschichte des Altertums*, Vol. I, third edition, 1910, p. 174).

<sup>2</sup> In contrasting historical "laws," such as they are, with those of the natural sciences, Wundt writes of the former that they are referable to *psychological* "principles" and therefore cannot be regarded as strictly *historical* laws, and, secondly, that they always represent the final results of historical analysis rather than constitute postulates from which history or any particular historical process could be deduced (*Logik*, Vol. III, third edition, 1908, p. 386). Wundt thus reaches the concept of "singular law," which, in its application to history, states that in a particular series of events and conditions each link is causally determined by the preceding and accompanying conditions, but that, on account of the complexity of the conditions, the entire series must be regarded as unique, in so far as it has never occurred in the past and may not be expected to recur in the future (*ibid.*, p. 430).

Wundt's highly suggestive if little-known analysis of historical "principles" cannot be discussed here. I reserve this task for a later publication: namely, my *Theory of Social Evolution*, which, under the most favourable conditions, will not appear for another two or three years.

ing that even today no accurate estimate can be made of the limits of its usefulness. This stands for a staggering array of new mathematical discoveries. Again, Lobachevsky's penetrating re-examination of the postulates of Euclidean geometry led to the conceptual possibility and subsequent realization of alternative systems. The effect on the world of mathematical thought was cataclysmic; the mighty pillars of absolutism, theretofore the secure foundations of the edifice of exact science, suddenly gave way. Mathematics, and with it the theoretical branches of the physical sciences, turned their backs on absolutism and embraced the theory of relativity.

Mechanical determinism is observable in the history of inventions, in the narrow sense. In view of the fact that progress from primitive to modern conditions is most conspicuous in the realm of technical or mechanical achievement, the application of the deterministic category in this context becomes of special importance. Determinism here, formulated in most general terms, means this: pending a particular invention, or one of a class, further progress in a given technical field is precluded; then, when the required invention is made, possibilities for further progress are opened up, and presently a new crop of inventions takes the field. Mechanical determinism, then, which, from another angle, is also a conceptual determinism, merely implies the opening up of new possibilities. An invention is made; this prepares the way for another, or one of a set, and provided that invention in the field continues — meaning that a sufficient number of ingenious minds apply themselves to the problem — the further invention, or one of a set now made possible, will actually be made. A good illustration is furnished by the aeroplane. Not so long ago the solution of the problem of aerial flight in heavier-than-air machines began to be regarded as an unrealizable dream, like the *perpetuum mobile*. Men like Jules Verne and H. G. Wells saw visions of future bird-men, but those technically competent were skeptical of the possibility of building a motor combining the essential properties of power and lightness. Ultimately the feat was achieved. The Wrights made their first flights in heavier-than-air machines made possible by using the principle of a rapidly propelled winged plane supported in its flight by the resistance of the air. New vistas were now opened for further inventions pertaining to aerial navigation, many of which could not have been made or even realized in thought without the experience of flying. The amazing rapidity of the ensuing progress was induced by an accidental factor, the World War; but the fact of interest in connexion with determinism

is the causal continuity of inventions constituting a deterministic chain. The history of the printing-press, the hydraulic hammer and press, the reciprocating and later the turbine engine, the telescope, telephone, wireless, radio, submarine, abounds in similar situations.

Factors of the deterministic-historical category operate in the socio-psychological domain. Take the facts of standardization. Cultural features representing a certain aspect of culture, such as religion, art, ethics, tend to develop one or more standards or patterns and to conform to them. In the absence of complicating or opposing tendencies these patterns prevail over possible alternatives to such an extent as to constitute practically fixed or crystallized forms. The success of these tendencies is roughly proportionate to the simplicity and isolation of a culture.

Another socio-psychological principle with a deterministic component of this type is the formalization of cultural features. A ceremony, rite, concept, or institution loses its emotional or intellectual content, so that only a shell remains, as form or behaviour. Here belong the so-called survivals. Familiar examples are marriage by capture, once a grim reality, later a puzzling symbol; or magical rites passing into children's games; or former prayers no longer suggested by a set of nonsense words; or that motley host of religious beliefs, practices, experiences, which become reduced to mere shadows of their former selves when fed only on Marett's "evaporated emotions." In a wider sense, every culture teems with survivals; for the decay of the psychic content of institutions is a never ceasing process. This loss is compensated for by another socio-psychological principle of deterministic rigour: namely, the constant appearance of new contents, values, functions. This is perhaps best exemplified by the fluctuations of functions in social units. A clan originally merely exogamous becomes a religio-ceremonial unit, possibly, but not necessarily, at the cost of its function as a regulator of marriage; a guild organized on a technological basis grows into an economic, social, political factor; an organization for the dispensation of charity develops into a powerful political machine; an institution created for the promotion of learning becomes an athletic club or a military unit; etc., etc. Everywhere and at all times, in culture, new wine is being poured into old bottles, and new bottles are provided for old wine.

The principle of division of labour also belongs here. Take a group of individuals with certain tasks to perform, and division of labour will set in. Specialization may or may not develop, tasks may multiply or

they may not; but division in labour is inevitable. This will obtain whether the group is primitive or modern, natural or artificial.

Another less obviously relevant principle is syncretism. As usually employed, this term refers to the fact that a deity in the ascendancy tends to absorb the qualities and functions of other deities, which it gradually supersedes. In a wider sense, such a syncretic tendency is observable in any development towards centralization with an accompanying shifting of functions. A machine, in the course of its technical history, may become more and more complicated through the addition of separate parts for new functions; then a simplification is achieved, so that a smaller number of well-co-ordinated parts perform the same tasks equally well or better (the syncretism here is mechanical on the technical side, and psychological on the mental side of the implied inventions). A commercial concern or factory, weighed down by overhead, calls in a scientific-management expert; he redistributes human and technical units, combines co-ordinated functions in the same persons; production, per time and power unit, rises; overhead goes down, and profits go up. In a state, finally, numerous powers and functions may be assumed by the central administration, until only functions of purely local and personal concern are left to the constituent minor social units and the individuals comprised in them.

Two further principles must be mentioned here, the principle of saturation and the principle of the pendulum or reaction. The two principles are correlated. Development in a certain direction will often continue, according to the principle of inertia<sup>1</sup> or the line of least resistance, until a physical limit is reached, or a psychological limit, which makes the situation absurd or self-defeating; then reaction sets in, "opposite" developments come into favour, the pendulum swings back, swings too far, perhaps only to return with a similarly exaggerated sweep. This rhythmic pulsation of development has often been commented upon as a familiar aspect of historical processes. An ornamental art becomes ornate; the possibilities of at all acceptable decorative excesses having become exhausted, a reaction sets in in favour of simple lines and unobtrusive patterns. It is interesting to note that the historic Moslem, late Gothic, and Rococo find their counterparts in

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<sup>1</sup> The principle of inertia itself, in one of its manifestations, provides a striking illustration of psychological and social determinism: present acts and attitudes are, *ceteris paribus*, determined by past acts and attitudes, in so far as their very occurrence establishes a bias in favour of their repetition or retention. This has an individual and a cultural aspect: the first is rooted in psychological inertia, resulting in habits and resistance to change of habits; the second adds to this the more objective inertia of institutions, with their characteristic lags.

ornateness in the primitive arts of New Guinea and New Zealand. The approximate limit of ornateness having been reached, these decorative techniques generate tendencies in compensating directions, provided, of course, that development does not cease altogether.

As Spencer has noted in his *Facts and Comments*, the reputations of philosophers, musicians, writers, tend to rise and fall with the swing of the pendulum of popular favour. This has happened to George Eliot, Dostoyevski, Mendelssohn, Shakspeare, Aristotle, Spencer himself. When we like a man's work, we tend to like it too well; surfeited with its own fervour, popular fancy swings back with a bound, swings too far, to return once more, on the rebound. Romanticism engenders Realism, and vice versa. A Hegel has his Marx.<sup>1</sup>

There remains one further important principle bearing on the deterministic-historical category, the principle of the limitation of possibilities in development.

Speaking of the detection of crime, Sherlock Holmes once said: having excluded the impossible, accept the alternative, no matter how improbable. This shrewd remark has relevance for our problem. To say that there is only one possibility of development is to say that the event is categorically determined. Such is the nature of the cosmic determinism underlying our naturalistic philosophy. With reference to the events of human history, determinism, we saw, is not categorical, but relative; one of the aspects of such determinism is expressed in the principle of limited possibilities. Even in the history of mathematics, the most rigorously deterministic of the successive series, there exist multiple possibilities of development. Thus, the differential calculus can be derived from the theory of limits as well as from that of infinitesimals, and the successive steps or inventions, in the two cases, are different. In mechanical invention — provided the problem is clearly defined — the number of possible solutions is usually strictly limited. The known mechanical principles constitute one drastic limitation;

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<sup>1</sup> In a broader historical perspective, Eduard Meyer uses this principle in his theory of "historic ideas": "In the history of religion, art, science, and culture in general, we discover the dominance of this 'reversal of ideas' (*Umschlag der Idee*), in which the principle of freedom cedes to that of compulsion; and, as a consequence, the idea, under the pressure of general factors, changes, in all its manifestations, into its opposite. This provokes a reaction in the form of the germination of a new idea which deprives the old idea of its dominance, later itself to succumb to a similar fate. In this way the struggle, and with it the cycle of historic events, are constantly resumed; but in each individual instance the particular nature of the active factors is different and, as a consequence, also the final result." And, with an obvious exaggeration of the significance of the principle, the historian concludes: "Therein is rooted the inner unity and the endless diversity of history" (*Geschichte des Altertums*, Vol. I, p. 183).

another is contributed by the technical properties of the appliance to be improved (if such is the task); a third is to be found in the function or functions to be fulfilled by the new invention.<sup>1</sup> In material things the objective or technical limitations imposed by use are often stringent. The ways in which a sword, paddle, or knife can be made and remain what it was intended to be, are not many; most or all of the possible ways have been actualized at one time or another, and each has probably been arrived at more than once. In religion, again, consider animism. Here the possibilities seem to be limited to one: if another world besides the material arises at all, it will be an animistic world. This world of spirits is in part fashioned after its material twin, but it is also distinguished by those qualities of dynamism and elusiveness with which it was once endowed by the mind of man, when at bay before nature. This is animism. Psychologically it may be regarded as over-determined: the ways or stages through which it may be arrived at might differ somewhat, but come it must.<sup>2</sup>

The determinisms referred to above require some further comments. In the first place, these determinisms should not be confused with the universal principle of causality; when compared to the latter, they are, as it were, more intimate, and certainly more concrete and specific. Further, let us repeat that these determinisms are in no sense absolute, but relative in two respects: they obtain within a system of preferential relations; and the events predicated allow of alternatives, more or less limited. In most instances, again, the spring of action is not supplied in these determinisms. In other words, they do not, in themselves, constitute a guarantee that anything further will happen. The general formula applicable to all such situations would run somewhat as follows: *if* anything further happens — in a particular conceptual, mechanical, psychological system — it will be one of several alternative events, inventions, ideas, or it will fall within the limits of a certain range of possibilities.

A still more important consideration remains: the determinisms enumerated under the various headings are comparable only as such, as determinisms. But the groups of phenomena to which they refer are qualitatively distinct, and the channels through which each of the determinisms operate are also different. Thus the steps in the mathematical

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<sup>1</sup> In practice the financial aspect provides another limitation. The latter, however, is not inherent in the mechanical series; it belongs to another system. When the financial restrictions are eliminated or almost so—as in war—a tremendous precipitation of inventions is the result.

<sup>2</sup> For further illustrations, with a somewhat different reference, see pp. 46–8.

series are fixed by the necessities of purely abstract and formal relations in thought. The steps of the mechanical series are also in part conceptual — to the extent, namely, to which theoretical principles are involved or evolved in the thinking. But the mechanical series is in part conditioned purely mechanically: the invention of a technical device — a link in the series — is delayed, not because the next step is conceptually impossible, but because another invention must be technically realized to provide a point of attachment or departure for the next one. In the field where the principle of limitation of possibilities was found applicable, determinism simply means that at any given stage in the series the range of possible events or processes is limited. Nothing is implied with reference to the linkage of successive events in the series. When we speak of determinism here, all we mean is that the indefiniteness, the adventitious character of the series at any given point, decreases with the limitation of possibilities: the narrower the range of possible succeeding events, the more rigid the determinism. In the case of some of the principles of the socio-psychological level, finally, one may speak of dynamic "tendencies." The principle of division of labour or that of the pendulum are cases in point. Granted certain conditions here, not only the character of the event but, for once, its very occurrence, seems to fall into the deterministic series.

It will be seen that none of these determinisms are, strictly speaking, historical. They refer to certain series of linked events which occur *in history* — provided it lets them. This will become clearer when we examine the accidental categories.

*Deterministic-Contemporaneous Category.* — Indubitably, every culture is, in a sense, a unity, an organic integer. But the relations between the different aspects of a culture are patently not strictly deterministic. A certain form or degree of development of one aspect does not justify a definite inference as to the degree of development or the form of another aspect. We know that attempts to represent one aspect of a culture as a corollary of another have invariably proved abortive. Nevertheless, a certain determinism, in our restricted sense, is present here. For there is a limit to the possible or probable discrepancies between the different aspects of a culture. In the case of material culture and social organization, for example, it can be pointed out that among the Eskimos a complex material equipment coexists with a crude and amorphous social system, whereas in Australia an in-

tricate social organization is associated with a distinctly primitive state of the arts and crafts. On the other hand, political aggregates of any degree of integration and orderliness cannot exist without certain advances in material culture, as expressed in road-building, solid and relatively permanent habitations, and the like. This may be observed in modern civilization, but also in Africa, in the native Negro states. And, conversely, buildings and bridges such as those of modern cities, would be unthinkable, technically or otherwise, in a primitive community, amorphous politically, and with a crude social organization. While these illustrations are obvious because extreme, less evident but relevant examples could readily be adduced. Thus, the socio-political status of central east Africa could be roughly deduced from the fact that in the industrial field we find there numerous flourishing industries coexisting in one district and among the same people.

Similarly in religion and morality. A humanitarian ethics, resting in a sense of human brotherhood, is incompatible with a religion which calls for human sacrifices; an undifferentiated animism is never associated with an individualistic ethics; a powerful monotheistic divinity invariably becomes the source of categorical sanctions of moral behaviour; and so on.

Or in art and knowledge. Realistic art, always dependent on careful observation, cannot progress very far without a fairly accurate knowledge of the external anatomy of animals or of man. Painting and architecture on a high level are inconceivable without an advanced technical knowledge of materials and correlated processes.

Again, with reference to social organization and knowledge, the facts point in the same direction. Only crude knowledge is possible as long as social conditions are such that most adults are concerned with life-preserving or protecting activities. By and by an advance is made in the division of labour, specialization brings relative expertness, and the increasing complexity of life leads to a slackening of tradition and dogma. Then only do we expect to find that personal detachment, deliberate observation, persistent application, and critical judgment without which the systematization and conceptualization of knowledge are impossible. And, conversely, in the absence of a passable knowledge of nature and man social life must remain unconscious and rule traditional, while the ubiquitous prescriptive and proscriptive regulations will, under such conditions, be adventitious and haphazard. With the accumulation of natural and social knowledge, and the concomitant development of methods for the study of social processes,



social planning, based on such knowledge, becomes possible, and with it constructive legislation. Clearly, then, a certain limited determinism exists between the two sets of facts in their coexistential aspect. As a consequence, it becomes possible, to a degree, to deduce the social organization of a group, or at least some aspects of it, when the state of knowledge is known, and vice versa.<sup>1</sup>

Coexistential determinism will also be found in the socio-psychological level. At all times and in all societies we can discern leaders, strong men, dominant personalities, with reference to whom others appear as inferiors, followers, subordinates, disciples. The determinism here is so deeply rooted in organic and social fact as to be present not merely in human societies, but also among animals and birds. The so-called phenomena of group action also belong here, in particular those known as crowd-psychological. The positive correlation between the number of common functions exercised by a group and the feeling of solidarity provides another illustration of coexistential determinism. Symbolism, on its socio-psychological side, supplies further examples. In its most common form this social symbolism may be described as the tendency of groups of solidarity, in function or status, to project their communal consciousness into some object or process — the symbol — which henceforth stands for the solidarity of the group, perpetuating and enhancing it. High-school and college classes, athletic teams, sailors, prisoners, secret societies, totemic clans, all supply instances in point.

*Accidental-Historical Category.* — In dealing with this category we must once more remember our definition: "accidental" does not mean uncaused, nor wholly outside the connected chain of events which constitute our conceptual universe; but an accidental event or thing is one normally belonging to a different system from the one in which it makes its appearance in the particular instance: from the standpoint of the latter system the event or thing is accidental. It thus becomes clear that all phenomena pertaining to intertribal, international, inter-culture-area contact, will fall into this category. From the standpoint of the north African natives the advent of Mohammedanism was an accident; so also was the Spanish introduction of the horse among the Indians of the Plains; the appearance of white man's iron among the American Eskimos was an accident, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> A tremendous exaggeration of the scope of coexistential determinism is characteristic of Spengler's *Decline of the West*.

that of "fire-water" among all primitive tribes which were suddenly thrown open to the blessings of civilization. The coming of maize to Africa was, from the standpoint of the cultures of that continent, wholly adventitious, and so was the inception of Athapaskan patterned basketry among the Tlingit of southern Alaska. The contributions made by the peoples of Asia to the cultures of Europe were, one and all, historical accidents for Europe, no less than the elements of Chinese civilization and, more recently, the various features of European and American civilization, were for Japan. Again, *Mrs. Warren's Profession* was an accident in the New World just as the "cake-walk" was in the Old. In all of the above and innumerable similar instances the "accidental" events or things did not grow out of the preferential connexions of events within the recipient systems — at most one might speak here of a certain readiness or preparedness for the reception of these things or events<sup>1</sup> — but came from without, from other systems; not only were the time and place of emergence of these events or things adventitious, but their particular contents came as chance accretions to the systems which received them.

While the accidental factors are particularly conspicuous when the interacting systems represent distinct tribal complexes, culture areas, nations, or continents, the applicability of the concepts of system and accident is by no means restricted to such situations. There is, on the contrary, no breach of continuity between the application of the concepts of system and accident to the mutual relations of relatively large, integral, and historico-geographically disparate units and the application of these concepts to the interrelations of smaller and less independent systems within the limits of such units. Thus the systems of law and religion in a culture, while not mutually independent, may nevertheless proceed for long periods of time along relatively disparate paths, until the ascension to the throne of a bigoted or fanatical monarch, or the impending separation of Church and State, throws the two systems into violent opposition or unites them by bonds of unprecedented harmony. The events or things precipitating these newly acquired relations must, from the point of view of the two systems, be regarded as accidental.

The last and equally important application of the concept of system, in the accidental category, refers to the individual. What is involved here is the relations of the individual to the cultural content

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 137, note.

and to the historical series of events. Unquestionably, the specific content of the individual mind is derived from the cultural setting—where else, indeed, should it come from?—but to admit this is one thing, to identify the individual with “his” culture, another. The individual is not a mere microcosm minutely reproducing the cultural macrocosm. As has been intimated before, no individual is within reach of all aspects of his group culture. This is the more conspicuous the greater the complexity of a culture. So that in modern or some of the ancient civilizations the individual is truly representative of only a small fraction of the culture, is less intimately associated with a larger part of it, and remains practically outside of what may be the major part of the group culture. It appears, then, that even from this standpoint it would be naïve to regard the individual as wholly “determined” by his culture or as a replica of it. Granting the individual as a system, the particular participations into which he enters will appear adventitious, at least in part.

So far we have only considered the variability of the cultural content of an individual in so far as it reflects the ways in which culture comes to him. An examination of the individual as a selective agency brings out the same relation with much greater force. The human mind, as we know, does not face the world of experience as a *tabula rasa* or as a mere passive reflector. The congenital capacities and limitations come into play here. These innate qualities exercise a marked influence not only on the degree of assimilation of the cultural material by the individual, but on the very nature of this material. Thus, an average individual with his passive reaction, and a gifted one with his creative response, will transform an identical cultural material into a very different cultural content. Again, an individual with a limited gift for painting, music, or mathematics is not merely incapable of adding to the cultural material presented to him in one of these fields, but will, in certain instances, be powerless to assimilate it or even to accept it, except in the vaguest sense. Thus, a non-musical or but slightly musical person cannot even hear certain elements in a Mahler or Strauss symphony, or, more accurately, cannot hear them in a musically significant sense; similarly, a mathematically indifferent mind, however carefully trained, could not grasp the full import or perceive the beauty of an equation in celestial mechanics.

Nor is this all. Over and above the biological factor of innate ability there is the biographical aspect which concerns itself with the individual as one who lives a particular life, his own. The reaction of an

individual to a particular bit of culture confronting him depends on his attention, interest, assimilative readiness, the value or significance of the cultural item for his ego. All these factors, again, depend on the totality of his past experience, on his biographical ego, on that particular and unique configuration which constitutes the individual as a *historic complex sui generis*. All this has nothing directly to do with either culture or biology. Thus, the individual emerges as a highly adventitious aggregate of psychic dispositions and accretions, as a synthesis both unique and unforeseeable, except in its most general aspects.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of the effect of an individual on culture or the historical process comprises similar aspects. Culture as such, as well as the historical process, is of course a super-individual phenomenon. Now, the intrusion of an individual as an active agent — as a “cause” — into culture or history will therefore always appear as a crossing of two relatively independent systems. The exact time, place, and purport of such a crossing must be recognized as accidental, as unforeseeable, except within certain very wide limits.

*Accidental-Contemporaneous Category.* — No sharp line can evidently be drawn between this category and the preceding one. The illustrations just cited can do service here, with a slight change of setting. This is especially true with reference to what may be called the phenomena of “foreign contact.” Diffusion has its contemporaneous as well as its historical aspect, in the narrow sense. The same is true of the relations occasionally arising between different aspects of a culture which normally constitute relatively disparate systems. To the illustrations already cited I might add here “camouflage” in the World War. Art and military development were two realms of European civilization which before the war were practically unrelated. With the rise of the aeroplane came the necessity of protection against the eyes of bird-men above. Thus arose camouflage. In the domain of art this meant intensive observation, from unaccustomed angles, of objects on the earth, and the application of the artist’s imagination to the creation of disguises mimicking the effects observed. In the domain of military art possibilities were reopened for surface dispositions of guns and fortifications — facts leading to further consequences in military technique — which the development of aerial scouting had

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., in this connexion, my *Robots or Gods*, last chapter: “Homo Socius et Civilis.”

rendered well-nigh impossible. As illustrating somewhat similar relations one might cite the occurrence of striking events, of individual or cultural derivation, which result in a rapid transvaluation of values. Thomas Mott Osborne's comet-like progress through the clouded skies of criminology was accompanied by a shift in popular sentiment towards prisons and prisoners, a shift so rapid that all balance was lost, bringing with it the serious danger of reaction, which set in somewhat later. Certain changes in women's clothes which the deliberate efforts of designers had failed to effect came with cataclysmic rapidity in response to war requirements; thus were initiated certain trends in style, taste, and notions of propriety, which have since proved to be relatively enduring.

*The Theoretical Categories and Cultural Reality.* — As in any analytical separation of a series which in reality represents a continuum, our categories are not free from certain elements of artificiality deserving a word of comment. It may prove interesting, moreover, to recombine the analytically separated series, in order to test the conceptual clarification induced by the analysis. To these two tasks we may now turn.

First of all, it might be objected that in any contemporaneous or historical set of phenomena the aspects of linkage and level always appear in combination, whereas here they were separated into independent categories. At first sight, this procedure would seem like a gratuitous and unnecessary refinement of analysis. It is, of course, true that every historical or coexistential situation is either psychological-deterministic or psychological-accidental or objective-deterministic or objective-accidental. An apparently more logical grouping of the categories would thus be into historical-psychological-deterministic, historical-psychological-accidental, historical-objective-deterministic, and historical-objective-accidental; and the same for the other temporal category, the contemporaneous or coexistential. This would also result in eight categories, with the apparent advantage of less violence being done to cultural reality.

The superiority of the latter procedure, however, can be readily shown to be ephemeral. If approach to cultural reality is to be the criterion, then it must with equal justice be pointed out that no cultural situation is ever wholly objective or wholly psychological, but combines aspects of both, according to the point of view or the purport of the analysis. Again, from still another angle, no permanently and ex-

clusively objective fact can ever constitute part of culture, as lived. Thus the truly objective might be left out altogether, the categories then being conceptualized as actively psychological and potentially psychological. Then again, the deterministic and accidental aspects of a situation are not mutually exclusive, but represent two sides of the historical reality which is never wholly deterministic nor yet wholly accidental, but comprises enough stabilizing factors to allow the formulation of certain historical principles or tendencies, even though not laws, and enough accidental factors to justify the concept of the uniqueness of historical events. And, finally, the historical or sequential and the contemporaneous or coexistential series do not represent two sharply distinguishable sets of events; rather do they constitute an ever flowing continuum. Bergson was right, one might say, when he made light of the existential character of the present. Tomorrow has barely time to be today before it becomes yesterday.

What results from this critique of our analysis, then, is the rehabilitation of cultural reality, which is never wholly deterministic nor yet wholly accidental, never wholly psychological (or active-psychological) nor yet wholly objective (or potential-psychological), never wholly of yesterday nor yet wholly of today, but combines all these in its existential reality. That such a rehabilitation of culture would result from a critique of the categories as representing but certain aspects of cultural reality was, however, to be expected; a reconstructive synthesis re-establishes the unity necessarily lost in the process of analytical dismemberment.

Clearly, there is nothing in this experiment *per se* which would constitute a valid criticism of the categories. They must stand or fall with the theoretical validity and significance of distinguishing for purposes of analysis the three standpoints from which the categories were derived, those of time, level, and linkage. The justification of the standpoints, again, can only lie in the resulting clarification of concepts. Whether this has been achieved, it is, of course, not for me to judge.

*The Deterministic and the Accidental in History.* — It must have appeared before this that the deterministic and accidental aspects of history or culture are intimately interrelated, being, in fact, both complementary and mutually restrictive. The deterministic tendencies are in various ways influenced and kept in check by the accidental factors. It must be remembered that the deterministic tendencies as such do not, as a rule, contain the dynamic elements, the driving power, of

development. With certain fundamental socio-psychological principles this is very nearly the case, but generally the deterministic aspect merely suggests that, *in case* anything happens within the series or system, it is likely to be one of a number of things or events pointed to by the tendency. Conceptually these possible events may be designated as the limits of the deterministic tendency. The driving power, the "yeast" of history, is supplied by various accidental factors, in origin individual or socio-psychological; at any rate, external to a given system. Not that these accidental factors must of necessity fall into the "foreign contact" group. If the culture is at all complex, the processes of self-fertilization through interaction between smaller systems within the culture are quite adequate to supply the "yeast" by themselves.

Among these smaller systems the individual is one, for, under these favourable conditions, the individual is sufficiently distinctive as a system of relations, and unique as content, to exert a marked effect on culture and history through the exercise of his will, creativeness, and personality. In small and relatively isolated primitive groups, however, the drag of social or institutional inertia is such that non-conformism is next to unknown, and individual creativeness itself is robbed of its germinating fire by the unyielding resistance of the channels through which it is forced to flow. In such situations the "yeast" of foreign contact comes like the breath of life, whipping into shape the heretofore unrealized possibilities of the deterministic tendencies. Again, only the *what* of events is within limits deterministic; the *when* and only to a lesser extent the *how* are accidental. And, finally, the limits of determinism in history are hardly ever univocal, consisting merely in a limited number of possibilities. Which way the dice will fall, what will *actually happen*, is a matter of accident.

The accidental, then, appears, after all, as predominant in history, when it comes to the particular *when*, *where*, *how*, and to a degree even the *what* of events. The concept of the "uniqueness of historical events" thus stands vindicated. Accident decrees whether anything will happen, when and how it will happen, which one of several possibilities will be realized, whether the actualization of a potential event will occur through the maturing of certain elements within a system or through the ready acceptance of an appropriate element coming from without, by foreign contact.

The accidental itself, on the other hand, is restricted by the deterministic factors. Certain things coming from without a system, or, for

that matter, from within, will not "take." The new element does not find a deterministic current strong enough to carry it to fruition, or it may be opposed by a contrary current. Certain things, of foreign or domestic origin, "mean nothing." Examples of this are forthcoming whenever two cultures of greatly different level come into contact. Two Australian tribes, or an Australian and a Melanesian one, will exchange cultural elements extending, perhaps, along the entire range of culture, and all might prove fruitful and stimulating. The same will hold with reference to two representatives of modern civilization. When, on the other hand, a modern group comes into contact with a primitive tribe, the mutual stimulation is slight or, at best, follows certain very narrow channels. The primitive group adopts certain cruder products of our material culture, without, however, learning how to make them; it may borrow certain externals of etiquette and address; but the foreign art, religion, social system, legal form, "mean nothing" to the primitives; they "fall" completely "flat," they glide off the surface of their culture without leaving as much as a scratch. The same, of course, is true with reference to the effect in the reverse direction. Other elements, again, will encounter a reception in a culture which by its readiness and assimilating quality suggests the support of a deterministic tendency. Then, we say, the event has occurred at the "psychological moment"; or certain tendencies or potentialities are "in the air"; a new element finds ready acceptance if it chimes in with "the spirit of the times"; a tribe, a nation, is "prepared" for certain developments or innovations. In certain cultural situations, when the deterministic elements are pronounced, a thing or event, or one of a few, is almost "bound" to happen, on any number of provocations, especially so if the possibilities are limited. In such a case the situation may be designated as overdetermined. This is the determinist's long suit. With reference to great men, he will say: "If not he, then someone else"; similarly, with reference to the theory of history: "What is important is not whether the thing happened, but whether it was likely to happen," meaning that, even though the particular thing may not have happened, the "time was ripe for it," so that this or another equivalent thing was likely to happen "at any time."

Thus the accidental and the deterministic appear as two inseparable ingredients of the historical process. Leave out the deterministic, and history becomes a hodge-podge of adventitious things and events, a something without rhyme or reason, and, as a consequence,



incomprehensible, unforeseeable, and uncontrollable. Leave out the accidental, and grave injustice is done to reality, for law and order are then claimed as a fact, whereas they are, at best, but trends or tendencies, not strong enough to have their way wholly, but fully strong enough to regulate, and to that extent to control, the shower of accidental fact. And, if this is so, then interpretation, not wholly subjective, a cautious foresight, and limited control also become possible.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In this essay the categories and principles are treated somewhat abstractly. In "Neo-Evolutionism," Vol. II of my *Theory of Social Evolution*, the attempt will be made to illustrate and vindicate them by a comprehensive store of historical data.

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## II

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### The Principle of Limited Possibilities in the Development of Culture



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## II

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### The Principle of Limited Possibilities in the Development of Culture

THE CONCEPT OF CONVERGENCE, LONG FAMILIAR TO BIOLOGISTS, has also been applied to ethnological phenomena. The history of the term in ethnology is brief. Without giving a definite theoretical formulation of the concept, Franz Boas has used it in a number of his writings dealing with general topics.<sup>1</sup> Paul Ehrenreich refers to the use of the term by Thilenius and von Luschan. Ehrenreich himself gave the concept its first clear expression in a signally illuminating address read before the German Anthropological Society, at Worms, in 1903.<sup>2</sup> An instance of the application of the concept to the solution of theoretical ethnological problems is represented by my "Totemism, an Analytical Study."<sup>3</sup> The mechanism and psychology of the process, however, have only been hinted at there.<sup>4</sup>

Fritz Graebner, in his *Methode der Ethnologie* (1911), has dealt with the principle of convergence in a high-handed fashion. Without theoretically denying the possibility of convergence, Graebner practically rejects it, together with the wider concept of independent development. Graebner's arguments were met by Robert H. Lowie in his article "On the Principle of Convergence in Ethnology,"<sup>5</sup> to which we must now turn.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, his "The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology," in *Science*, N.S., Vol. IV (1896), pp. 901-8; and "The Mind of Primitive Man," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, Vol. XIV (1901), pp. 1-11.

<sup>2</sup> "Zur Frage der Beurtheilung und Bewerthung ethnographischer Analogien," *Correspondenzblatt der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*, 1903, pp. 176-80 (to be referred to as *Ethnographische Analogien*).<sup>3</sup> See pp. 213 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 316-7. See also Lowie: "A New Conception of Totemism," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIII (1911); and Goldenweiser: "Exogamy and Totemism Defined: A Rejoinder," *Ibid.*, pp. 596-7.

<sup>5</sup> *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXV (1912), pp. 24-42 (to be referred to as *Convergence*). See also Boas's review of Graebner in *Science*, N.S., Vol. XXIV (1911), pp. 804-10; and Roland B. Dixon's "The Independence of the Culture of the American Indian," *Science*, Vol. XXXV (1912), pp. 46-55.

*Some Interpretations of Convergence.* — It will be well to consider some of the instances cited by Lowie under the heading "Premature Classification." He notes the various forms of exogamy where apparently similar marital regulations are found, on analysis, to depend on entirely different psychological conditions. The exogamy may be local, or it may refer to a clan or relationship group. Here "the identity of the facts compared is logical, while the facts we are really interested in studying are psychological."<sup>1</sup> The author then adduces the interesting case of the Todas, where an approximation to a dual division has resulted from the numerical preponderance of one clan the members of which intermarried with almost all the available individuals of the other clans, leaving very few to intermarry with one another.<sup>2</sup> The instance of the Crow and Gros Ventres is even more striking. The Foxes and Lumpwoods of the Crow prove to be the remnants of a larger number of societies, while among the Gros Ventres one of the two organizations is a recent importation from the Sioux. "In the two cases under discussion, then, a dual grouping is beyond a doubt the result of convergent development."<sup>3</sup> Then the author contrasts the "hour-glass drums" of Africa and New Guinea, only to find that "the geometrical abstraction defined by the term corresponds to no cultural reality: it develops in different areas by convergent evolution."<sup>4</sup>

In the following section, on "The Possibility of Genuine Convergence," Lowie observes that even absolute objective identity of two articles or ornaments need not justify the classification of such articles or ornaments as actually identical, for they may belong to different cultural settings and, in so far, stand for vastly different psychological facts.<sup>5</sup> Here are adduced the instances of the "eye-ornament" of America and Melanesia, the "rejects" of American archæology, the central Australian "neoliths" and "palæoliths." The concluding paragraph of the section deserves being quoted in full: "We are not always, indeed we are very rarely, in the fortunate position of knowing most of the determining conditions of an ethnological phenomenon. In the case of the rejects, of the Central Australian 'neoliths,' and of the eye-ornament, we happen to be in possession of the facts; and from these instances we learn that morphological identity may give presumptive, but does not give conclu-

<sup>1</sup> *Convergence*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

sive, evidence of genetic relationship. It is conceivable that if we could determine the history of the South American paddles which Graebner connects with Indonesian and Melanesian patterns, we should find them to be genetically related; but we cannot bar the other logical possibility of independent origin, for it is likewise conceivable that each of the homologous features of the paddles originated from distinct motives and distinct conditions.<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen from these quotations that Lowie favours the psychological point of view in ethnology as against a purely objective consideration of data, and champions the cause of independent development as against diffusion or historical contact. As to convergence, Lowie's main concern seems to be the elucidation of the concept of false convergence. While he deserves credit for a forcible treatment of the facts of premature classification, he has advanced but little towards an elucidation of the concept of convergence or of its functions as a methodological tool in ethnology.

A new principle always finds itself on the firing line of scientific controversy. An awkward move may mean the loss of a tactical advantage. It is therefore to be regretted that Lowie's formulations do not always preclude misapprehension. Surely he is aware of the distinction between the principle of independent development and that of convergence, yet he concludes his discussion of independent development *versus* historical contact with the words: "If there is any difference in the value of the two theories, it must rest on the alleged absence of historical proofs for independent development, in the face of the universally admitted existence of such proofs for historical connection. It remains to be shown that this allegation is erroneous, that there exist unexceptionable instances of convergent evolution. For this purpose it is necessary to examine somewhat more closely the concept of convergence." Here Lowie passes from a discussion of independent development to one of convergence, without so much as a word of explanation; and the unwary reader may easily be misled into identifying the two principles. There is vagueness also in Lowie's treatment of another and more important point. When the critical ethnologist finds that two similar features in two different cultural complexes are genetically distinct, he refuses to treat them as comparable; for, from the historical point of view, the individuality of a cultural trait is defined by its history. When we deal with convergence, on the other

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

hand, where genetic relationship is by definition excluded, objectively similar phenomena become comparable if they are also similar psychologically. That in Lowie's treatment the two kinds of similarities between cultural traits are not clearly differentiated may be gathered from the passage where, having introduced Ehrenreich's concept of "false analogies," Lowie remarks: "The observation of similarities, especially in the absence of obvious paths of diffusion, then leads directly to the query whether the similarities are not purely classificatory, and hence, from the standpoint of genetic relationship, illusory."<sup>1</sup> But the "similarities" may well be illusory "from the standpoint of genetic relationship," and yet constitute either false or genuine convergence, according to the character of their psychological relationship. Again, in the concluding paragraph of the section on "The Possibility of Genuine Convergence," quoted above, Lowie speaks of "morphological identity," which "may give presumptive, but does not give conclusive, evidence of genetic relationship."<sup>2</sup> But morphological identity without genetic relationship may constitute an instance of either false or genuine convergence.

Two features of the situation, in particular, seem to worry the author: the arguments in favour of convergence are sorely deficient in historical instances, while the process itself seems far from plausible psychologically. "Granted the existence of identities, they are inexplicable."<sup>3</sup> True, Lowie attempts to adduce some "unexceptionable instances of convergent evolution";<sup>4</sup> but all his illustrations prove, after all, to be merely instances of false convergence, of illusory similarities due to premature classification. In one instance only does Lowie admit the possibility of genuine convergence. He writes: "If we discover that the *manang bali* of the Sea Dyaks corresponds in the most striking manner to the *berdache* of the Plains Indians, we should not straightway identify the two institutions and invoke the principle of psychic unity or that of historical connection. . . . The advocate of convergence in the sense here proposed will simply await a fuller determination of the facts. If closer investigation should establish an absolute identity, the fact of identity would stand, but would stand unexplained."<sup>5</sup> While deploring with Dr. Lowie that historical proof of convergence is difficult to produce, I hope to show in what follows that sufficient theoretical grounds can

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<sup>1</sup> *Convergence*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

be adduced to justify the application of the concept to cultural phenomena. As to the psychological side of convergence, let us note for the present that parallelism and diffusion present psychological problems of equal difficulty.<sup>1</sup>

Lowie's evident reluctance to admit the existence of genuine convergence may in part be due to the fact that under genuine convergences he seems to understand, not similarities in cultural traits, but identities. In this he professes to follow Ehrenreich, whose conception of genuine convergence he interprets as "a belief in an absolute identity derived from heterogeneous sources."<sup>2</sup> In justification of his interpretation, Lowie adduces a quotation from Ehrenreich, which I reproduce in English: "Where similar psychic disposition is combined with a similar economic phase and social stage, *culture will bear a similar character, will represent a similar type*; nor need we be surprised if such similar cultural types reveal marked correspondences in particulars and induce convergences"<sup>3</sup> (italics are mine). I confess I fail to detect in this statement any belief in identities. At different times in the course of his remarks Ehrenreich speaks of "*Ähnlichkeiten*," "*Analogien*," even of "*überraschende Ähnlichkeiten*," and "*auffallendste Übereinstimmungen*"; but he nowhere refers to identities.

The concept of identity, if applied to cultural or more generally to any psychological traits, would, indeed, smack of mysticism.<sup>4</sup> Granted that such identities occur, we lack the means, either objective or subjective, of discovering the fact. Thus, whenever psychic factors are involved in the terms of our comparison, we may speak of similarities but not of identities. But the existence of similarities of varying degrees suffices to justify the concept of convergence.

Thus it comes that Lowie, shunning the mystical flavour of cultural identities, seeks refuge in the plausible illusion of "false analogies." Says Lowie: "But the entire aspect of the question changes if we do not interpret the given parallels as identical or homologous, but merely as analogous." And again: "It is merely necessary to conceive all parallels of any degree of complexity as 'false analogies,' . . . and the mystical element in the theory of convergence disappears."<sup>5</sup> It will, I trust, be seen that this mystical aspect of convergence

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 52 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> *Convergence*, pp. 31-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ethnographische Analogien*, pp. 177-8.

<sup>4</sup> This, of course, does not hold for material culture, where objective identity may be demonstrated.

<sup>5</sup> *Convergence*, p. 31.



is of Lowie's own making; it need, therefore, not concern us any further.<sup>1</sup>

Curiously enough, Dr. Lowie, in his half-hearted vindication of convergence, fails to use the psychological point of view which he employed so successfully to disclose the illusory character of false convergences. He speaks of exogamous units which differ in their historical antecedents as well as in their psychological setting. The first trait justifies the conception of the units as convergences; the second, their classification with false convergences. But suppose the units are also similar in their functions or psychological setting; suppose the dual divisions that developed independently and in dissimilar ways in two cultural groups become associated with similar functions, such as reciprocal activities, or rivalry in games, and we have genuine convergence. Similarly in the case of exogamy. In two historically unrelated cultures exogamous groups have developed. If the psychic setting of the two sets of exogamous regulations is different, if it is, say, in one set determined by locality and in the other by clanship, then the resemblance between the two exogamous groups is merely a classificatory one — the instance is one of false convergence. On the other hand, if both groups display the same kind of exogamy, of locality, clan, or relationship group, we have an instance of genuine convergence.

It is of interest to note here that Graebner, some of whose views have been so vigorously attacked by Lowie, himself admits the theoretical possibility of convergence. He writes, in substance: it is conceivable, at least theoretically, that features originally quite different become markedly alike by convergence or through combination with other similar features.<sup>2</sup> And again: it cannot be gainsaid *a priori* that similar cultural features need not be due to the psychic unity of man, diffusion, or borrowing, but may also be explained as a result of convergence; that is, the progressive resemblance of originally dissimilar features under the influence of similar natural or cultural conditions.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I am under the impression that some of those who frown upon the concept of convergence tend to ascribe to it a mystical setting of a totally different order. The responsibility for this may rest with the term "convergent evolution" employed interchangeably with "convergence"; for "convergent evolution" invites comparison with "evolution" as ordinarily used, or "divergent evolution." Now, evolution, of course, refers to an organically unified process; hence this trait is also ascribed to convergent evolution, which thus acquires a mystical content; for the processes leading to convergence, while on the one hand conceived as independent of one another, are on the other believed to be co-operating harmoniously in the production of similar cultural traits. As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind is implied in the concept of convergence, which is merely a term for certain cultural similarities brought about by processes that are neither historically connected nor parallel.

<sup>2</sup> *Method*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Similarly, on page 106 of his *Methode* we read, in effect: the mere similarity of final stages is not sufficient for an inference as to a more or less pronounced similarity in development; we need entire series of developmental stages. Such caution is prompted by the possibility of a convergent development of similarities as the end result of dissimilar series of stages.<sup>1</sup> These apparent admissions of convergence on the part of Graebner are, however, not altogether sincere; for we presently find that he denies the existence of positive criteria for all independent developments of similarities.<sup>2</sup> It is on this aspect of Graebner's position that Lowie has concentrated the fire of his attack. In the section on the "Logical Standing of the Rival Theories" he has succeeded in showing that wherever positive proof of genetic relationship is not forthcoming, the criteria of historical connexion are no less dependent upon the subjective attitude of the investigator than are those of independent development.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Lowie's critique has sapped the very foundations of Graebner's theoretical objections to the independent development of similarities. Nor is Graebner more successful in his attempt to justify his negative attitude by a consideration of a set of empirical data, drawn from the historic cultures of Europe.<sup>4</sup> The fairness of the entire argument may well be doubted, for all similarities within a cultural area which admittedly constitutes an organic whole will, of course, be ascribed to the homogeneity of the cultural setting. No inference may therefore be drawn from these considerations which would bear on the problem of the existence of similar but historically unrelated cul-

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<sup>1</sup> It must be noted here that Graebner's interpretation of these for him only theoretically possible convergences is altogether inadequate. Having referred to the similarity of cultural setting and of physical environment as the causes of convergence, he proceeds to the following argument: "As, however, a specifically similar cultural milieu, if not due to cultural relationship, can only be explained by a similarity of natural conditions, the latter remains the primary cause of convergences" (*Methode*, pp. 94-5). This exceedingly unsatisfactory conception is vigorously repudiated by Boas, who writes: "Is not in every problem of interaction the character of each of the interacting phenomena of equal importance? In the particular case here discussed we may say that our whole experience does not exhibit a single case in which two distinct tribal groups are so much alike in their mental characteristics that when they are subjected to the same modifying causes, these mental differences could be disregarded, and it is an entirely hypothetical and improbable assumption that in earlier periods absolute mental uniformity ever existed in distinct groups" (*Science*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 805-6). The problem is discussed with admirable clearness by Bernheim (*Lehrbuch der historischen Methode*, 1903, pp. 94-6), who emphasizes the complexity of cultural processes, and points out the importance of considering the psychic factor and the historical past of a group, if its reactions to the physical environment are to be correctly interpreted. For a somewhat novel and suggestive treatment of the psychic factor, see also Clark Wissler: "The Psychological Aspect of the Culture-Environment Relation," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIV (1912), pp. 217-25.

<sup>2</sup> *Methode*, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> *Convergence*, pp. 26-31.

<sup>4</sup> *Methode*, p. 113.

tural traits in different groups. Graebner goes still further and asserts that even within the same cultural medium parallel developments are rare (*"trotzdem ist deren Zahl recht gering"*), a proposition so palpably opposed to our experience as to require no refutation. Graebner also refers to the fact that in many instances of similar ideas originated by different individuals such coincidences are only revealed by subsequent historical research — a proof that, of several similar ideas, only one or two take root in the psychic milieu of a particular period and bear fruit. A correct interpretation of this phenomenon, however, is given not by Graebner but by Boas, who writes: "The very fact that in modern civilization a new idea is frequently discovered independently by several individuals seems to me a proof of parallel lines of thought; and Mr. Graebner's statement that the thought of only one man becomes socially active, i.e., is adopted, seems to me to demonstrate just the reverse from what he claims. For an idea expressed at a time that is not ready for it remains barren of results; pronounced at a period when many think on similar, convergent lines, it is fruitful, and may revolutionize human thought."<sup>1</sup>

The entire subject of convergent phenomena within the same culture must, however, be clearly differentiated from convergence in the accepted sense; for one of the essentials of convergence is the origin of similarities through independent development; whereas, in the instances referred to above, the similarities must probably be ascribed to imitation, the reproduction of a precedent functioning as a pattern, or to the assimilating or levelling influence of a homogeneous psychic setting. It does not follow therefrom that the similar results are reached by identical or even very similar processes. In so far as the processes are different, we have convergence; but these convergences do not develop independently of one another, and their psychology may well be different from that of independent convergences. I therefore propose to apply to convergence of this type the somewhat cumbersome term "dependent convergence."

The positive interpretation of convergence given by Boas is not altogether satisfactory in point of clearness. "Ethnic phenomena," writes the author, "are, on the whole, exceedingly complex, and apparently similar ones may embrace quite distinct complexes of ideas, and may be due to distinct causes. To take a definite example: Taboos may be arbitrarily forbidden actions; they may be actions that are not

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<sup>1</sup> *Science*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 806.

performed because associated with religious or other concepts. Thus a trail may be forbidden because the owner does not allow trespassing, or it may have a sacred character, or it may be feared. All ethnic units separated from their cultural setting are artificial units, and we always omit in our comparisons certain groups of distinctive characteristics — no matter whether the comparisons are made from the point of view of cultural transmission, or of evolutionary series. Thus, in our case, the forbidden action stands out clearly as a unit, that of the taboo, although its psychological sources are entirely distinct — and this is one of the essential features of convergence.”<sup>1</sup>

I doubt whether this presentation is apt to make clear the idea of convergence as held even by Boas himself. The discussion of taboos in varying psychological settings merely emphasizes the importance of the psychological factor for a correct estimate of cultural phenomena, thus serving as a warning that, unless one gives proper weight to the psychological factor, one might classify together phenomena that are essentially distinct. Boas here fails to make clear the distinction, so often emphasized by himself, between the psychological setting of a custom and the psychological sources of its origin. Taboos which in different areas may have sprung from similar psychological motives may in each area acquire a distinct significance, and one totally at variance with the original motive. On the other hand, taboos of multiple psychic origin may develop similar psychic settings,<sup>2</sup> when exposed to the influence of similar cultural conditions frequently found in geographically separate areas.

It is to this latter type of instances that Boas refers when he speaks of taboos the “psychological sources” of which “are entirely distinct.” But again the situation is not fully analysed; for when we speak of the results of the different psychological processes as taboos, as “forbidden actions” that “stand out clearly as a unit,” either these taboos may be psychologically distinct, thus constituting an instance of false convergence; or some of the taboos may also be similar psychologically. If, in the latter case, we can make sure that the psychological or historical origins of such taboos were distinct, the instance would be one of genuine convergence. In the following passage, however, also quoted by Lowie, Boas states his position quite

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ehrenreich: “The psychological theory, finally, must count with the fact that similar phenomena may spring from entirely distinct ideas, while similar basic ideas may lead to entirely different results” (*Ethnographische Analogien*, p. 177).

definitely. He writes: "We have ample proof to show that the most diverse ethnic phenomena, when subject to similar psychical conditions, or when referring to similar activities, will give similar results (not equal results), which we group naturally under the same category when viewed, not from an historical standpoint, but from that of psychology, technology, or other similar standpoints. The problem of convergence lies in the correct interpretation of the significance of ethnic phenomena that are apparently identical, but in many respects distinct; and also in the tendency of distinct phenomena to become psychologically similar, due to the shifting of some of their concomitant elements."<sup>1</sup> The statement of the problem of convergence in this form perhaps errs in so far as it draws no distinction between the problem of genuine convergence and that of false convergence, but it compares, in my opinion favourably, with the position taken by Lowie, in two respects: Boas recognizes the reality of genuine convergence, whereas Lowie refuses to regard it as anything but a remote theoretical possibility; Boas also leaves no doubt that false convergence must be regarded as a distinct ethnological problem, while Lowie seems to hold that whenever a supposed case of genuine convergence proves on analysis to be false convergence, owing to premature classification, not only does "the mystical element in the theory of convergence disappear,"<sup>2</sup> but the entire problem resolves itself into a *Scheinproblem* requiring no further attention.<sup>3</sup>

We must now turn to Ehrenreich to whom belongs the credit of having given the concept of convergence a tangible form. For Ehrenreich the actuality of convergence is beyond question: "The fact of the existence of such convergences even between the separate groups of mankind is undeniable, but is still awaiting a definite analysis and interpretation."<sup>4</sup> After a brief reference to convergence in material culture, he passes to more complicated and striking instances of convergence, such as the far-reaching resemblances between the cultures of the Papuans of New Guinea and the Indians of central Brazil. Ehrenreich would expect convergences wherever "similar psychic disposition is combined with a similar economic phase and social stage." While it is doubtless true that "psychic unity" coupled with similar-

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<sup>1</sup> *Science*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 806-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Convergence*, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-2, "Conclusion."

<sup>4</sup> *Ethnographische Analogien*, p. 177.

ity of economic and social conditions would constitute a congenial medium for convergence, these conditions do not suffice for a psychological interpretation of convergence, as Lowie has shown.<sup>1</sup> What a liberal use Ehrenreich proposes to make of the convergence principle appears from the following passage: "Brazilians and Papuans are representatives of such similar cultural types. On a primitive level, the Botocudos, Veddahs, Bushmen, and probably African pygmies generally, are to be regarded as convergent; whereas the Australians, who are often represented as analogous to these, are comparable to them at best in technology — in their sociological features they have travelled an entirely distinct road. In the realm of higher cultures the civilizations of Babylonia, ancient Egypt, and China present similar types with often striking convergences. Juxtaposable to these are the cultures of America, similar among themselves and, as a unit, convergent with the Old World cultures. Modern culture, finally, as a carrier of civilization in the narrowest sense, shows a tendency to obliterate all differences of type: instead of convergence we find here universal acculturation."<sup>2</sup>

In this sweeping application the concept of convergence becomes so vague and general as to signify little more than an expression of the fact that even the most diverse cultures may display certain most general similarities. It is, indeed, not easy to see what could be meant by the convergence of two cultures in their totality over and above the specific convergences embraced in these cultures. Still greater difficulties arise when one tries to interpret the concept of convergence as applied to a complex of cultures with reference to another complex of cultures. It may, of course, be admitted that in the interrelations of cultures within such complexes, certain similarities as well as differences will always be discernible; but the term "convergence" when applied to such similarities becomes elusive in proportion to its generality and ceases to represent a tangible reality.

*The Limitation of Possibilities and Convergence.* — A limitation of possibilities checks variety. In relation to historical series of linked objects or features this means that wherever a wider range of variability in origins and developments coexists with a limitation of end results, there will be reduction in variability, decrease in dissimilarity,

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<sup>1</sup> *Convergence*, pp. 30-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ethnographische Analogien*, p. 178.

and increase in similarity or convergence. Most patent illustrations of this principle can be found in the domain of material culture or technology. Take an oar. Arms can be used as oars. Also all kinds of materials, stone, bone, bark, even metal. Oars can be long or short, light or heavy, circular in cross-section or flat, wide or narrow, of even width or otherwise. Now, in accordance with local conditions, or chance, most of these materials and shapes have been used for oars at one time or another and are still being so used, in a pinch. But if you want a *good* oar — and this is what you do want, at length — the end result is limited by the conditions of use. The oar must not be so short as not to reach the water or only barely so, or too long; it must not be so heavy as to be unwieldy, or so light as to preclude the resistance desirable in measured rhythmic movement; it should not be brittle or so pliable as to render it unfit as a lever in a dense medium. The manner in which an oar is used precludes uniformity of shape throughout its length. The blade, in order to offer proper resistance to the water and thus enhance propulsion, must be flat, also somewhat curved longitudinally and laterally, like a shallow spoon open at the end, with the concavity on the side opposite to the direction of the movement of the boat. The butt end, on the other hand, must be adjusted to manipulation; it must not be flat but circular in cross-section, not too bulky nor too slight. The middle section of the oar is a connecting link between the blade and the butt; its length is determined by the desirable length of the oar; it must be strong enough to withstand the stresses; and so on. It is desirable, finally, that the oar be of material that can float, so that it could be readily recovered from the water. The limitation imposed by conditions of use is here so drastic that every oar is emphatically — an oar, implying numerous points of similarity between all oars. Now, no one but a wholly myopic diffusionist would believe that the oar has been invented but once in the history of culture. It would be equally absurd to assume that the precise stages, initial and subsequent, in the development of oars in different localities were identical or even markedly similar. But sooner or later, in one way or another, they all had to come about, to result in the *good* oar, a tool with certain relatively fixed features determined by conditions of effective use. Thus the histories of the oar in different places represent a set of convergent processes.

Similar settings encounter us on all sides. There may be all sorts of pots, but any pot, in addition to being a particular kind of pot or this specific individual pot, is, first of all, a pot; that is, a receptacle fit to

hold things, to put things or pour liquids into; it is a receptacle similar to a bottle or a vase, but also different from both. As such, it has and must have certain features that are diagnostic — for a pot. The art of fashioning a fit, handy pot will be learned. This process of learning, taking generations, differs in different places, but ultimately there emerges — a pot, a good pot fit for use. Such a pot is, in many essential particulars, like any other pot. There is here, once more, convergence.

And so it is with practically any object, tool or weapon. In many technologically indifferent features the range of variability is unlimited; but the requirements of effective use impose limitations, more or less stringent, on the variability of other features — there is a narrowing of the range if the object is to function as intended. Now, these diagnostic features, earmarks of fitness, can but seldom be intuited in advance of experience; rather are they discovered in the course of operation, in the painful school of trial and error, where an object, tool, weapon, which is not what it should be, exacts a penalty from the operator. All such processes are strictly historical and, as such, subject to the incidents of time, place, ability, traditional pattern, chance; but if persisted in long enough, these processes will converge in certain features to culminate in the desired goal — a thing fit for its uses.

What is so patent in technology applies equally to other aspects of culture, where, however, the operation of the principle is less readily discernible.

Decorative art, from certain angles, appears as an extension of the technological field. Designs on basketry, for example, are characterized by angularity owing to certain peculiarities of basketry technique. The limitation here lies in the latter. As a result, patterns of whatever provenience, when drawn into the basketry field, acquire the characteristic traits of angular designs, being thus reduced, in a measure, to a common denominator. There is convergence.

If geometrical designs in different regions are examined from the standpoint of rectilinearity and curvilinearity, what we find is not a haphazard utilization of both, but the predominance or even absolute sway of either one or the other, or, in certain instances, a combination of both with certain fixed limitations. The limitation here is not technological but psychological. Rectilinearity and curvilinearity are not indifferent elements in design. On the contrary, they strike the eye and command attention. What we observe, then, is that as soon



as one or the other type of design gains the ascendancy — and this may happen for all sorts of reasons — it will push on to complete dominance, ultimately excluding the other type altogether. Or, again, the two tendencies will come to a compromise, as it were, the result being a mixed type. Before a geometrical art reaches relative stability, it will have to assume one of these three forms. To these forms then all geometrical arts, of whatever origin or history, will converge.

The same holds in the philosophical level, with reference, for example, to materialism and spiritualism. Entities, if not material, must be spiritual or, at least, not wholly material. In the subconscious philosophy of the primitives, both categories were accepted, no attempt being made to reduce one to the other. In the deliberate rationalistic philosophies of later ages such attempts at reduction to monism were made again and again; either spirit or mind (which, if conceived as an entity, is no more nor less than spirit) was reduced to matter, or vice versa; or, as in Spinoza or Spencer, the two were regarded as different aspects of something third. Neither the origins nor the histories of these intellectual approaches were the same, but the end results were identical or strictly comparable, of necessity so, owing to the limitation of possibilities. Once more, there was convergence.

In *dependent convergence* the limitation of possibilities is introduced by the prevailing patterns. Any thing or custom coming in from outside, for example, will have to assimilate itself to such a pattern or be rejected. A business organization, a club, a spiritualistic doctrine, may be borrowed from "abroad" where different patterns prevail. Each one of these cultural features will have to converge to the pattern prevalent in the new home, or acclimatization will be impossible, or difficult. The cultural intercourse between Europe and India, for example, abounds in convergences of this last type, working, in this case, in both directions. In two countries, finally, belonging to a wider culture area, such as France and Germany, many cultural patterns are of necessity the same. The pattern, as we saw, here provides the limitation. Suppose then a foreign custom or idea-complex strikes France and also Germany. In each it will converge to the local pattern. But, the two patterns being similar, the resulting convergences — in France and Germany — will also be similar. Thus a new item of similarity will be added to the cultures of the two countries.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> When this essay first appeared, in 1913, the above section, which was the corner-stone of the essay, comprised an entirely different argument. It ran, in brief, as follows: The historical and psychological sources of cultural traits, whether objectively ascertainable or merely con-

Limitation, then, invites convergence. Whenever convergence is pitted against diffusion, while historic evidence is lacking, it thus becomes necessary to examine each instance for a possible limiting factor. Should such a one be present, convergence becomes probable, and the burden of proof then falls on the diffusionist.

*Convergence versus Parallelism.* — The argument of the preceding section, designed to establish a firm theoretical foundation for the principle of convergence, does not in the least militate against the principle of parallelism. The two principles must share the task of interpreting cultural similarities when not caused by historical contact. It may be stated at the outset that no proof has been forthcoming of at all significant parallelisms in the development of integral historical complexes. On the other hand, parallelisms of relatively limited duration and content have been revealed by historical and ethnological research. Here the historian proved more successful than the ethnologist, for the reason that the latter's material seldom appears in the form of chronologically continuous series. If not for this handicap, the relative success of the two types of students might well have been reversed.

A question arises here which may be of interest in its bearing on ethnological research. In individual instances, of course, the verdict will be parallelism or convergence, according to the merits of the case. But are there not theoretical grounds of a more general char-

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jectural, are more numerous and multiform than their cultural descendants. This multiplicity and multiformity of sources of development represent the cumulative result of the multiple possibilities of origin and development of the separate cultural features. The multiple possibilities of historical derivation, again, are but the obverse of the limited possibilities which control the shaping of cultural features. And again: The psychic aspects of culture, when compared to the multiplicity of their possible psychological and historical origins, constitute a further limitation in the possibilities of development. . . . The result of this limitation of possibilities in development is convergence.

When Professor Boas, then editor of the *Journal of American Folk-lore*, received my manuscript, he replied in a long letter in which he pointed out the fallacy of the argument just presented. Cultural features converge and diverge, he wrote; some single features become diversified into a multiplicity, they spread out; other multiple features converge to a reduced number of similar features or even to one feature. There is thus both multiplication and reduction in "possibilities." The argument from "limitation" works both forward and backward. Therefore, it does not work at all.

I did not at the time perceive the validity of this criticism, and the argument went in as written. During the years that followed, many anthropologists and sociologists adopted the principle of limitation and recognized its bearing on convergence. My argument, in the mean time, was forgotten.

When revising the essay for this volume, I recalled Professor Boas's criticism (the letter being lost), and for the first time its justice dawned upon me. As a consequence, I threw out the entire section, substituting in its place the argument of the text which, I trust, demonstrates the bearing of limitation on convergence, while avoiding the vicious circle of my early effort.

acter for the preferential application of one or the other principle? One ground for comparison would be the extent to which hypothetical elements enter in the application of the two principles. Here the balance points clearly in favour of convergence, for the assumption of only one stage at which the antecedents of two cultural traits were dissimilar or less similar than the traits themselves, would substantiate the claim for convergence; whereas parallelism involves the assumption of a more or less extended series of similar stages, the probability of which varies inversely with the number of stages. Here Graebner is doubtless right when he says with reference to convergence: In the main and according to prevailing opinion, this conception, as a supplement to the concept of elemental ideas, fits into evolutionary ideology. In one respect, however, the concept of convergence approaches the culture-historical standpoint, in so far, namely, as it involves an absolute evaluation of individual traits. When similar traits are not glibly interpreted as final stages of similar developments, then each separate trait must be examined with reference to its specific causes and cultural relationships. Whether the investigation discloses a regressive rapprochement of the causal series or a lack of connexion between them, will then be a difference in conclusion rather than in method.

Another argument in favour of convergence arises from a consideration of cultural traits in their relation to historical processes. Since the time of Spencer, Tylor, and Frazer, the resemblances of cultural traits in different cultural complexes have become commonplaces of ethnology. The orthodox evolutionist correlated these similarities with parallel series of developments rooted ultimately in the psychic unity of man. The results of historical and ethnological research proved fatal to this conception. While parallelisms of a kind do seem to occur, this does not hold of processes of any degree of complexity or extension in time. As to integral historical processes in their total complexity, their individuality is so conspicuous as practically to preclude the possibility of historical "laws," in a strict sense. The realization of the individuality of historical processes became a stimulus towards more intensive analysis of cultural traits. And presently it could be shown that many alleged similarities in cultural features were largely illusory, having resulted partly from lack of definite information, partly from artificial classifications of cultural phenomena. The rigorous application of the psychological point of view led to similar conclusions: many objectively similar cultural features, when

studied in their cultural settings, were easily shown to resolve themselves into thoroughly different contents. This destructive research notwithstanding, a wide domain of genuine cultural similarities survived the onslaught of critical analysis. Thus arose a peculiar situation: *similarities in cultural traits had to be correlated with diversities in historical processes*. The principle of convergence seems admirably fitted for this task. *If similar origins and processes of development are not necessary antecedents of cultural similarities, the apparently contradictory situation finds its solution*. Thus the concept of convergence may prove applicable to many if not most of the cultural similarities harnessed by the evolutionist for his own purposes. But whereas the latter attempted in vain to corral all similarities into the pen of parallel developments, convergence simply accepts the two equally impressive series of facts: the heterogeneity and individuality of historical series, and the objective and psychological similarities of many cultural features in different times and places.

It can, I think, be also shown that every instance of parallelism involves, of necessity, convergence, unless one is prepared to accept the possibility of two parallel series, from "first origin" to culmination. This appears if one tries to reconstruct in general terms the histories of two similar and genetically unrelated cultural features. The immediate antecedents of the features may have been either equally similar, or more similar, or less similar: parallelism, divergence, or convergence would obtain. In view of the established diversity of historical series, the probability of finding equally similar features in our reconstruction, of finding them at more than merely a few stages, is slight. Soon we should hit upon divergence or convergence. This circumstance is simply the expression of the principle that the probability of a parallel series is, roughly speaking, inversely proportionate to the length of the series. The only alternative assumption, as said before, is that of two parallel series which, from their very inception, started as similar features and continued parallel throughout the entire extent of their histories. But this assumption is contradicted by our entire experience.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Two such historical series as those mentioned in the text may be compared to two men, out of touch with each other, making their way through the woods. Let us grant that they proceed in the same general direction, say towards the rising sun. No paths guide them on their way. What will happen? Played upon by time, place, and chance, the lines of their advance will constantly diverge and converge. The men might even meet; but unless deliberately intent on sticking together, they will separate again. It is not impossible that for short stretches they might progress along parallel lines. But this will only happen here and there, or it may not happen at all. Such also is history. Series of historical changes are poor travelling mates.

Thus convergence, methodologically considered, has several points in its favour when compared to parallelism. Parallelism itself, moreover, involves convergence.

*The Heuristic Value of the Principles of Parallelism, Diffusion, and Convergence.* — While the fight rages over the principles of parallelism, diffusion, and convergence, the temptation lies near to identify the problem of the interpretation of culture with the successful application of one or all of these principles. Nothing could be further from the truth, however.

We have heard of many different kinds of parallelisms. Whether any or all of these parallelisms are figments or constitute at least partial historical truths need not here concern us. But it will be admitted by most if not all representatives of parallelism that parallel series do not in themselves furnish a rationale of culture. When demonstrated or made probable, they do not constitute a solution, but a problem, one not so far successfully attacked.

The same is true of diffusion. Even the most superficial analysis would suffice to show how little we know about a cultural situation when all we know about it is that a feature belonging to one culture has been borrowed by another culture. How often does such a feature remain a foreign body in its new cultural environment! For instance, the *art nouveau* of western Europe, which, towards the end of the past century, made itself felt in the plastic and decorative arts and, from a modest beginning in the field of small decorative objects, rose to the level of a new artistic style, and all but created a novel form of architecture. Eventually the *art nouveau* crossed the Atlantic. But here, in new surroundings, it lost its vitality. After languishing for a number of years in the show-windows of fashionable stationery and art stores, it vanished without leaving an apparent trace on any form of American art.

A somewhat striking example of a cultural feature which, notwithstanding a prolonged objective association with a cultural medium, failed to be psychologically assimilated by it, is furnished by the history of classical education in tsarist Russia. Engrafted upon the Russian school curriculum by a misguided administration, taught by teachers of foreign birth, radically at variance with the intellectual interests and the practical needs of the Russian educated classes, classicism in Russia never became an organic part either of culture or even of the educational system.

Instances of partial assimilation of borrowed cultural features can as readily be given. The American university with its college and schools is one. Modelled after mediæval and more recent European patterns, the American university has to a large extent become assimilated and transformed by American life, with its peculiar ideals and requirements. The process, however, cannot be regarded as completed, and evidence is plentiful of the varied maladjustments of our universities and colleges to the practical, moral, and intellectual requirements of today.<sup>1</sup>

The failure of the policy of Russianization in Poland and Finland is another case in point. Both Russian Poland and Finland have certainly absorbed much of Russian culture, but these acquired traits were but partly assimilated by the historic cultures of the two countries; and in both the well co-ordinated organism of an autonomous culture is but superficially hidden behind the outward guise of Russian institutions.<sup>2</sup>

In other cases perfect assimilation of imported elements has taken place. In modern civilization numerous cultural traits originally belonging to disparate cultures have become so thoroughly acclimatized in their new media as to lay the foundation of that ever progressing uniformity in many essentials of culture called "internationalism."

The European horse has been made their own by the Plains Indians, even to the extent of becoming one of the most characteristic traits of their culture. The Salish Bella Coola have borrowed so much and so well of the social organization, religion, ceremonies, material culture, of the coast peoples, as to become practically identical culturally with them.<sup>3</sup>

Partial acceptance in some instances, perfect assimilation in others, and in still others rejection. We are just beginning to discern the underlying causes of these processes. By embracing them all in the general terms "diffusion" or "genetic relationship" no more is achieved than to suggest the initial direction for further research.

Another consideration must be adduced here to show the intimate relationship between the problem of diffusion and those problems which arise in the study of a local cultural complex. In discussions of cultural origins, as in other connexions, it is customary to contrast

<sup>1</sup> Compare the discussions in James McKeen Cattell's *University Control*.

<sup>2</sup> I need scarcely add that the events of recent years have confirmed this diagnosis (first penned in 1913).

<sup>3</sup> F. Boas: "The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians," *Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, Vol. I, pp. 120-7.

the processes within a culture conceived of as "inner growth" with the processes involved in cultural contact. Now, in addition to the differences displayed by the two sets of phenomena, there are also fundamental psychological similarities. Foreign ideas or customs may be totally rejected, or they may become partly or wholly assimilated. These ideas or customs, first introduced by individuals or groups of individuals, spread through the culture area in a more or less rapid process of diffusion. Now, all this applies also to the ideas or customs arising within the group. They also may be rejected or assimilated, partly or wholly, and they spread in essentially the same way. The mechanism and psychology of the processes are strikingly similar. Of course, there is an important difference: the ideas and customs of indigenous origin are more likely to prove acceptable and become assimilated than those coming from without. This is obviously due to the fact that the indigenous ideas and customs are largely determined by the surrounding culture, whereas the foreign importations are independent of the recipient cultural medium. The main difference, then, seems to lie not in the processes of moulding and assimilation to which both the foreign and the indigenous are subjected, but to the fact that the range and character of the two sets of ideas and customs are likely to be different, more or less. This difference will be the smaller, the greater the similarity between the two cultures in contact.

It thus appears that the facts of diffusion bristle with psychological problems, and that these problems are in part the same whether we deal with cultures in contact or with a single local complex.<sup>1</sup>

Similar difficulties arise in connexion with the principle of convergence. No more than in the case of parallelism or diffusion is there a psychological interpretation of similarities in culture when they are ascribed to convergent developments. In instances of dependent convergence, for example, the relevant facts belong to the domain of convergence as well as to that of diffusion or genetic relationship. We have convergence in so far as the observed similarities derive from less similar sources; but, whereas in genuine convergence the development of similarities proceeds in two or more independent series belonging to different cultures, in dependent convergence the similari-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wissler's article: "The North American Indians of the Plains" (*Popular Science Monthly*, 1913, pp. 436-44), where, at the end of an all too brief but pregnant discussion, the author concludes: "In general, we believe that the facts warrant the assumption that the typical Plains culture was developed in the heart of the area, and was the composite result of independent invention and the adaptation of intrusive cultural traits from the east, south, and west."

ties are due to a common setting, to ideas that are "in the air," or to the suggestion of a pre-existing pattern. An interesting study could be made to show that the pragmatisms of Mach, James, Schiller, Dewey, or Bergson have developed from different sources and often through strikingly dissimilar processes of thought. On the other hand, it is plain that the thinking of these authors along pragmatic lines was to a large extent determined by certain widespread tendencies of modern thought.

Nor is genuine convergence obvious psychologically; and little has been done so far to illumine the underlying processes. The principle of limited possibilities brings home the reality and inevitability of convergence, but it bears only slightly on the psychological aspect of the situation.

Meanwhile, enough has been said to show that parallelism, diffusion, convergence, must be regarded solely in the light of heuristic principles. These concepts cannot be directly utilized for cultural interpretations, but a guarded application of the concepts may bring with it a rearrangement of cultural data inviting and facilitating such interpretations.





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### III

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## Psychology and Culture



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## Psychology and Culture

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ESSAY IS TO PRESENT IN A BRIEF formulation the relations between psychological facts and cultural facts, the approach being analytical as well as methodological.

*The Most General Relation between Psychology and Culture.* — To a superficial view the relation between the individual mind and culture seems paradoxical: on the one hand, culture springs from the individual mind; on the other, the mind itself is determined by culture.

When this proposition is expanded, the paradox disappears. If we had the knowledge and patience to analyse a culture retrospectively, every element of it would be found to have had its beginning in the creative act of an individual mind. There is, of course, no other source for culture to come from, for what culture is made of is but the raw stuff of experience, whether material or spiritual, transformed into culture by the creativeness of man.<sup>1</sup> An analysis of culture, if fully carried out, leads back to the individual mind.

The content of any particular mind, on the other hand, comes from culture. No individual can ever originate his culture — it comes to him from without, in the process of education.

In its constituent elements culture is psychological and, in the last analysis, comes from the individual. But as an integral entity culture is cumulative, historical, extra-individual. It comes to the individual as part of his objective experience, just as do his experiences with nature, and, like these, it is absorbed by him, thus becoming part of his psychic content.

This double relationship between culture and psychology has led to two opposite tendencies in the interpretation of cultural phenomena.

If culture is psychological in essence and individual in origin, it was argued, it should be possible to furnish an individual psychological

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<sup>1</sup> A branch is a bit of the physical environment. A branch used as a club is culture.

interpretation of any particular culture, without leaving a residue. The "great men" theorists of history often fell into this error, as did almost all systems of psychology, from the subjective analytical attempts of the classical associationists to the semi-experimental folk-psychologists of the Wundtian variety, and to the modern psychoanalysts.<sup>1</sup> The evolutionary anthropologists and sociologists were similarly at fault when they represented the culture of this or that tribe as determined by its psychological make-up.

To the same category belongs a recent work on social psychology in which the claim is made that all "explanations" (as distinguished from descriptions) in culture must rest in the individual, that the "causes" for cultural change can be found only in individuals.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 201 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to Allport's *Social Psychology*. In brief form Professor Allport presented his position before the American Sociological Society (Washington, D. C., 1923). It fell to my share to discuss this paper. My statement ran, in part, as follows:

Professor Allport's paper contains the following two assertions: (1) All causes in history are lodged in individuals; only individuals originate things; and, (2) while it is possible to describe social phenomena in purely social terms, any attempt to explain social phenomena necessarily requires a psychological technique. Similarly, psychological phenomena can be explained only in physiological or neural terms, and biological ones in physico-chemical terms.

I do not think that it is either theoretically justifiable or methodologically serviceable to regard the individual as the only cause of historic change. It is true that every element of culture, whether material or otherwise, at some time or other found its beginning in an idea, originated in an individual mind. Therefore, if only we had the knowledge, we could trace all elements of culture back to such psychological beginnings in the minds of individuals. On the other hand, if what we are interested in are the changes in culture or in individuals at any given time and place, social and cultural factors at once emerge as having causal significance. A great individual like Napoleon or Lenin or Homer may be treated as a historical cause or a complex of historical causes in so far as he has originated a legal code or won battles or written a great epic or conceived and carried out a social revolution. But such an individual himself is, of course, the product of his time—that is, his education and social setting. Whatever his inborn abilities may be, the specific content of his mind is contributed by the existing culture. He is therefore caused by it. Similarly, one cultural factor, while of course working through psychological channels, will causally affect or transform other cultural factors.

It is therefore merely a question of drawing a line through the historical process at the point on which our interest is centred. If what we are interested in is the individual as a causal factor in history, then we grant the individual however produced, and he henceforth becomes a source of cultural transformation. If, on the other hand, we are bent upon exploring the possibilities of cultural or social causation, then we postulate these factors as given at any particular time and place and may utilize them as units which themselves cause further transformations in the cultural process. As contrasted with the absolutistic views of history which explain all happenings either through the individual or through the group and then follow up these explanations as far back as possible in search of "first causes," the view of history here indicated may be designated as relativistic.

As to the distinction between description and explanation as drawn by Professor Allport, I cannot regard it as justifiable. Modern science conceives of explanation as conceptualized description. Also, it tends to substitute the question *how?* for the question *what?* When Karl Pearson tells us that matter is non-matter in motion, this revelation impresses one as somewhat shocking if what one purports to inquire is what matter is. But if one's interest is directed

All of these ideologies fail to do justice to the cumulative aspect of culture; they ignore the fact that the individual or individuals of a group are ever at the mercy of the precedents, patterns, styles, fashions of culture. Nor do they pay due heed to the fact that in the life of every people historical factors come into play which, from the standpoint of that particular culture, must be classed as accidental. The classical examples of this are, of course, borrowed cultural features which come from other tribes and cultures. These features are patently independent, not alone of the psychology of the recipient group, but also of its culture.

In sharp contrast to the preceding stand all those theorists who stress the historical and super-individual aspect of culture at the expense of individual and psychological factors. They assume that culture is wholly an objective, extra-individual entity, specific unto itself in nature and behaviour, which imposes itself upon individuals who, at best, can only be said to reflect it.

Among the evolutionists the economic interpreters of history, comprising Marx and his followers, represent this point of view. To them culture is objective, social, historical, cumulative, dynamic, determin-

towards how matter behaves or towards the behaviour of "something" which might account for the known properties of matter, then Pearson's statement seems no longer confusing.

If so much is granted, it still remains true that two ways of describing or explaining phenomena are always open: either social facts are described or explained sociologically, psychological ones psychologically, biological ones biologically, and physico-chemical ones physico-chemically; or social facts are described or explained psychologically, psychological ones biologically, biological ones physico-chemically, and physico-chemical ones of necessity still physico-chemically, if not in terms of pure conceptual abstraction.

Both of these modes of approach seem theoretically justifiable and have certain advantages as well as defects.

If a fact in one level is explained in unit terms of the same level, the advantage of the procedure lies in the fact that the autonomy of the level is preserved and the mystery (or at least puzzle) of the transformation of its terms into those of another level, avoided. Again, this mode of procedure preserves a conceptual diversity in the universe. This is hailed by some as desirable and rejected by others as reprehensible.

If, on the other hand, a fact in one level is explained by unit factors from another level, this leads to an ultimate conceptual unification of the universe, to a monistic world view. This also is welcomed by some and abhorred by others. Again, this mode of procedure has the disadvantage, or what to some at least seems such, of not only explaining but explaining away. Thus, when a social fact is explained in purely psychological unit terms, there is no more social fact left, and when a psychological one is explained in biological unit terms, there is no psychological fact left, and when a biological one is explained in physico-chemical unit terms, there is no biological fact left.

Differences of taste apart, it seems fairly obvious that both methods of procedure are theoretically justifiable and are likely to bring in the future, as they have brought in the past, ever richer insight into the nature of phenomena and of our thinking about them. (The complete discussion appeared in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology and Social Psychology*, Vol. XIX, April-June 1924.)

istic. To culture the chariot of history is harnessed. The individual is fleeting, passive, epiphenomenal, causally irrelevant. He is sitting in the chariot spinning highfalutin theories about its progress, while culture drives on. Here also belong the modern institutional anthropologists and sociologists, although their fervour is less irrational and unreal.

Those who think in this fashion do scant justice to the active participation of the individual in cultural growth. While it is certainly true that the cultural content comes to the individual in a way that is external and objective, the individual does, after all, re-create what he receives. He does so unconsciously, by dint of the very variability of his native endowment, as well as consciously, in the overt acts of psychic originality.

Even apart from this, however, the individual cannot be explained away by culture, for his psychic content is the result of what might be called biographical selection. The specific cultural content which comes to the psyche is not the only thing that counts. There is also the chronological order of the coming, as well as the emotional setting in which each element of experience is received.<sup>1</sup> It is this difference in the order and the apperceptive conditions that constitutes a large part of what we call individual differences. If this were not so, individuals of approximately equal native endowment and similar cultural setting would also be similar when clothed in their cultural garb, whereas, as a matter of fact, the opposite is obviously true.<sup>2</sup>

And, finally, however objective and extraneous to the individual culture may be, it must after all be remembered that it ceases to count, unless it be potentially, as soon as the psychic channels through which it can be communicated are removed. Culture, whether spiritual or material, counts only to the extent to which it is operative through psychic channels. Cultural features that are neither intellectually nor practically used nor æsthetically appreciated, nor are even known to exist, do actually not exist, as culture, except potentially.<sup>3</sup> They thus become equivalent to the passive elements of the physical environment, such as metallic ores in the Stone Age, which, although ob-

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<sup>1</sup> Compare, for example, two individuals familiar with strikes and economic theory, one of whom had the experience of strikes first, then studied economics, whereas the other did the reverse.

<sup>2</sup> For the biographical individual, cf. my *Robots or Gods*, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Such may be the fate of the Bible in some modern communities, or in others, of a Wagnerian opera.

jectively present, are yet culturally impotent because they are not reacted to or otherwise made use of.

*The Most General Relation of the Individual to Society.* — Man, being part of culture, is also part of society, the carrier of culture. Thus arises another apparently paradoxical situation, the attempted solutions of which took the form of three different ideological systems. Some held that man, being the locus of sensory life, was also the measure of all things, and that society was nothing but a grouping of individuals. All interpretations of social phenomena must therefore be sought in the processes of the individual mind. Others insisted that man came into the world a social animal, that all there was to him was social, that man the individual was an abstraction, and that all social as well as individual phenomena had therefore to be interpreted in social terms. Still others pointed out that the whole question was a fictitious one, a "pseudo-problem" (*Scheinproblem*), that the individual was society, and society the individual, and that the very attempt to juxtapose the two was a bit of abstractionist futility.

All three approaches can be shown to be erroneous. It is true enough that man is the locus of psychic life and therefore represents what may be called the sensory level of social phenomena. At the same time, social determinants, in the form, say, of motor habits or language, creep into the individual mind surreptitiously and unconsciously. To disentangle the "pure" individual mind from these meshes seems well-nigh impossible. Also, the effectiveness of some individuals as social factors necessarily moulds and determines other individuals; so that the very significance and conspicuousness of some persons imply the passivity and relative unimportance of others.

Again, the extreme social determinists err in so far as they simplify unduly the realm of social forces faced by the individual. As a matter of fact, this realm is highly complex, consisting in many partly contradictory social influences, some of which reinforce each other, while others cancel out, allowing for the occasional emergence of the relatively detached or desocialized individual.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most significant contrast between modern and primitive communities lies in this domain. Relatively speaking, the social forces or pressures in primitive society work uniformly, so as to affect all, and they work along parallel lines, as it were; while in modern society, owing to the multiplication of social subgroupings and the specialization of functions, these social forces or pressures constitute a complicated and intertwining network. As a result the individual is at times bewildered, but he may also slip through the meshes unscathed and relatively desocialized.



Those, finally, who deny the very existence of the problem of the relation of the individual to society are once more guilty of an abstractionist simplification. This relation is not a problem only in the sense that it is many problems, for the relation of the individual to the social varies both with the social situation and with the character and state of the individual.

This reflection brings us to the next topic.

*Levels in the Relations of the Individual to Society.* — Among the bonds which tie the individual to the group, some are complex, others simple; some categoric, others loose. This can be demonstrated by analysing one of the simplest forms of a social situation: namely, a crowd consisting of relatively like-minded individuals in physical or direct contact and subjected to a common stimulus. In this case the psychic content and the resulting reactions of the individuals constituting the crowd are so uniform that the crowd does indeed appear as a magnified individual, and the individual as a reflection of the crowd. For this reason also, while the crowd does not possess an existential soul of its own, it acts as if it did. If, indeed, it were assumed that a crowd soul existed, our interpretation of the crowd would not be modified thereby. An inspection of the individual mind, on the other hand, as revealed in crowd phenomena makes possible a fine insight into the cruder aspects of the original nature of man; for all truly individual and specific traits, such as the higher intellectual and spiritual functions, are for the time being in abeyance.<sup>1</sup>

At the other extreme is the lone thinker solving an intellectual problem in an abstract subject — the theory of numbers, for example. To him the social world is but an academic assumption the presence or absence of which in no way affects the task in which he is absorbed.

Between these two extremes lies a graduated series of levels of

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<sup>1</sup> The reason for the oft-observed phenomenon that the individual in a crowd is, as it were, pulled down to a lower level of biological life is, of course, to be sought in the fact that the emotional and instinctive factors are much older and basic in our make-up, and constitute for that reason the common denominator in any group of individuals. If we were to assume, for argument's sake, that man is basically *sapiens*, that the intellectual elements were genetically older and were in later evolutionary stages relatively thinly overlaid with irrational and emotional elements, then a crowd made up of such individuals would indeed create an intellectual superman. It would then think with its head, not its "bowels."

I may add, in passing, that the above remarks are not calculated to dispose of high-minded crowds. When an idealistic cue is given to a crowd under favourable apperceptive conditions, the response may be equally ideal. Instances: an appeal for funds in war time, or for assistance, financial or other, in a railroad accident or an earthquake. (For a suggestive discussion of this and other aspects of crowds, see Everett Dean Martin's *Behavior of Crowds*.)

socialization. This aspect of the subject deserves more deliberate study than has heretofore been accorded it.<sup>1</sup>

*Psychology and Culture from the Methodological Standpoint.* — The psychic unity of mankind lies, first of all, in the realm of the original nature of man. In the present state of psychological (or shall we say biological?) knowledge we are able to discern dimly the outlines of this original nature. It is certain, nevertheless, that the major range of psychic unity springs from this source. The sensory qualities of man, his amenability to the gastric, sexual, and propagatory urges, his gregariousness and sociability, his pugnacity and playfulness, his inventiveness and inertia, his limited but withal marvellous capacity to "think straight," his love of work and enjoyment of virtuosity, his vanity and love of power, and any number of other traits are certainly lodged in the original nature of man, either actually or potentially (whatever this may be). For this reason man everywhere, at all times and in all cultural stages, is much the same. This is psychic unity. This also is the domain of psychology. Bastian may have been exasperatingly vague in his treatment of the *Elementargedanken*, but at bottom he was right, for his "elemental ideas" of mankind stood for psychic unity, disguised by nomenclature.

Psychic unity expresses itself in cultural features of universal distribution. Universal features can be interpreted psychologically. Take the belief in spirits and magic. Psychologists of different schools have dealt with it — associationists, folk-psychologists, psychoanalysts — and each group has contributed valuable bits of interpretation.

Features that are general but not universal constitute a more difficult problem. Take, for instance, the clan, or the mother-in-law taboo, or secret societies. All are common, none universal. Does this mean that psychology must be discarded and history applied, if an explanation is to be sought? Not necessarily. There may be, in fact there are, perfectly good psychological or socio-psychological reasons for all three, but such reasons are not always categorical; they may

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<sup>1</sup> Samples of such levels will be recognized in the following situations: a crowd in the narrowest sense, comprising like-minded persons in intimate contact and subjected to a common emotional stimulus; a crowd of less homogeneous consistency, or one subjected to a less powerful stimulus; then a crowd in a wider sense, such as the readers of the *New York Times* or the *Dearborn Independent*, when subjected to a "typical" editorial; then a group of individuals, in the seclusion of their respective universities engaged in the study of the social sciences, who, while relatively detached, are yet subject to a variety of irrational determinants; and, finally, students of mathematics or celestial mechanics, isolated not only physically, but conceptually, alone, unemotional, detached, desocialized, *sapientes par excellence*.

constitute a trend, a tendency, without being an imperative. Whenever situations arise in which psychological and historical factors are blended, the methodological difficulties become tremendous. If psychological interpretations are at all applied here, they are usually doomed to remain hypothetical.

Thus we finally reach cases where the features to be explained are in a true sense peculiarities belonging to a particular tribe, district, nation. Cultural traits of this sort cannot be explained psychologically — here history claims its own. All we can say is that under no cultural conditions can features appear which would contradict psychology, but the specific features that do appear can only be accounted for historically.<sup>1</sup>

*Historical Explanations and Psychology.* — In view of the above considerations, it is often assumed that historical explanations preclude psychology. This is erroneous. To illustrate: Modern culture differs from primitive culture; one primitive culture differs from another; a modern national culture, that of France, differs from another, that of Germany. The explanation for all this is historical. So much being granted, there is still ample room for psychological illumination. The differentia of modern and primitive culture are determined by history. This provides the background for what may be called the modern mind and the primitive mind. But types of mind may in turn be used as a basis for psychological interpretations. In other words, there is such a thing as the primitive mind, just as there is a French mind and a German mind, even though the explanation for such "minds" must be sought in history, not in biology.<sup>2</sup> Granting this much, certain peculiarities in French literature may be re-

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<sup>1</sup> The distinction here is between necessary and sufficient conditions. In all "explanations" of culture certain psychological postulates are necessary, but they are seldom sufficient. The sufficient explanations are historical, and the latter, of course, are mere statements of what has actually occurred.

<sup>2</sup> This may be illustrated by the application of two concepts recently introduced by psychoanalysts: introversion and extraversion. Introverts are those who solve their problems and adjustments to the world in subjective terms; extraverts, those whose terms are objective or conventional. Some psychoanalysts extend the use of these concepts from individuals to societies or nations; they speak of an introverted Germany, an extraverted England or America. Now, this cannot mean that there are more extraverts born in England or America, more introverts in Germany (although this is assumed by some). But the terms "introverted nation" or "extraverted nation" need not, therefore, be rejected as absurd. In an introverted nation introversion is at a premium, therefore extraverts will be driven into introvert compensation; in an extraverted nation the reverse will be true. An introverted or extraverted nation may be the product of history, but, as introverted or extraverted, it has a typical psychic orientation. The rest follows. (The possibility that the concepts "introvert" and "extravert" may be invalid or imperfectly circumscribed need not concern us here.)

ferred to the logical rigour of the French mind, certain aspects of German science to the thoroughness (*Gründlichkeit*) of the German mind, certain aberrations in primitive technology to the mysticism of the primitive mind.

*Individual-Psychological and Cultural Analyses as Heuristic Tools.*

— In conclusion, a word about individual analysis and cultural study as tools in the ever fascinating quest of penetrating more deeply into the nature of the individual mind and into the essence of culture. Here the present cultural situation is our laboratory.

We are told that the burden of culture is becoming too much for the individual, that the ever increasing complexity of culture, combined with the modern urge for self-expression and personal freedom, create a psychological quagmire impassable for the average human being. Hence an increase in criminality, suicides, neuroses. At this point psychoanalysis steps in. From its intensive explorations of the struggles of original nature against the impositions of culture, there emerges fresh illumination of the very kernel of original nature. Whatever may be said in criticism of Freudian and other such mechanisms, the fact remains that we know more today about the urge of sex, repressions, conflicts, compensations, and sublimations, than we did yesterday, and we are hoping for an even richer harvest tomorrow. Original nature on the war-path proves a fertile field for psychological exploration.<sup>1</sup>

And there is a parallel situation in culture. While the individual remained subdued by institutional norms, the double task of culture — preserving the old and ushering in the new — was attended to with relative ease. Now comes the call for a revaluation of values. Less of the old, more of the new; less inertia, more progress; less institutionalism, more creative individualism; less cultural norm, more personal self-expression. Under the stress and strain of these new demands culture itself is developing a complex. Should it give way, who will venture the reconstruction? To the student, meanwhile, new vistas are opened for a more searching analysis of the nature of culture. How much mobility will it stand? What methods could be employed to increase its plasticity? Will the new recipe for culture be an improvement upon the old? Thus cultural rebirth may furnish clinical data for the social pathologist.

<sup>1</sup> It is not devoid of significance that Sigmund Freud should have crowned his literary career by contributions to social psychology (see especially his *The Future of an Illusion and Civilization and its Discontents*).



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## IV

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### Anthropology and Psychology



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### Anthropology and Psychology

**A**NTHROPOLOGY, THE SCIENCE OF MAN, AND PSYCHOLOGY, THE science of mind, must obviously be related in more than one way. From one angle, these two sciences belong to different but proximate levels; and in this capacity their relations must be like those of other groups of sciences similarly linked: the physico-chemical sciences and biology, the biological sciences and psychology, the science of psychology and the social sciences.

In the discussions of such linked groups of sciences two tendencies are observable. Some thinkers are inclined to interpret the phenomena of one level in terms of data belonging to the next level. Thus we have biologists like the late Jacques Loeb who think in terms of physico-chemistry and mechanism, psychologists like Münsterberg who reduce psychology to biology or neurology, and sociologists like Allport who approach social facts with psychological tools. Other thinkers prefer to restrict their interpretations to unit concepts belonging to the level of their data. Among these are Driesch and E. B. Wilson in biology, Joseph Jastrow and the psychoanalysts in psychology, and in the social sciences Durkheim, institutional sociologists like Kantor, and the cultural autonomists in anthropology.

There is, however, a third position which combines the two approaches. Like most compromise positions, it is unpopular in both camps and has so far made but little headway. It is granted that biological processes must conform with physico-chemistry, psychological processes with biology, sociological processes with psychology. Granting this much, it may still be maintained that each level comprises phenomena *sui generis*. Now, whenever one level is interpreted in terms of another, the very features which make the first level unique unto itself, invariably and inevitably disappear. Therefore, if the autonomy of the levels is to be preserved—and some will



hesitate to discard categories of thought so well grounded in experience — attempts will continue to interpret each level in terms of unit concepts belonging to the same level.<sup>1</sup>

In dealing with phenomena of the last two levels, the psychological and the sociological, a further complication arises from the fact that an altogether special significance attaches to the unit on which society is built up — namely, man. It is not a question of theoretical status, for man is no more significant theoretically than an atom, a cell, or the family; nor of existential status, for all of these units exist, experientially or at least conceptually. The special significance of man rests in his valuational halo. With modesty born of scientific insight, we laid aside the infantile vanities of primitiveness and have learned to see man's place in nature in its true perspective. But a residual anthropocentrism remains which will not be gainsaid or argued away. A unique warmth, intimacy, interest, attaches to all that concerns man, nor has the universe any say in the matter.

In view of these considerations, it seems worth while to devote the rest of this essay to an examination of the psychological assumptions, avowed or implied, underlying some of the principal trends in anthropological thought and procedure. To do this at all adequately would require a small volume, and even a superficial treatment will necessitate leaving aside many aspects of the relations of anthropology to psychology, to which omission I am cheerfully committed.

*Psychological Postulates of Bastian's Ethnological System.* — The work of Adolph Bastian belongs to the nursery of anthropological thought. Temperamentally this restless traveller and ardent lover of mankind was a philosopher and mystic. From the bewildering maze of facts he had observed in his world-wide contacts he succeeded in extricating a number of basically sound concepts. These were his *Elementargedanken*, *Völkergedanken* and *Geographische Provinzen*.<sup>2</sup> Bastian perceived that mankind was everywhere and always very much the same and he taught that this sameness expressed itself in similar "ideas" or tendencies which were ubiquitous. These *Elementargedanken* — "elemental ideas" — however, never found expression except in the form of *Völkergedanken* — "folk-ideas." The

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 60-1, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> For a somewhat more detailed examination of Bastian's ideas, see pp. 121 sqq.

elemental ideas were abstractions, tendencies or potentialities which were realized as folk-ideas. The folk-ideas, on the other hand, were concrete as well as definitely circumscribed in their provenience, for they were formed within certain geographical areas, the "geographical provinces," and under the influence of specific historical determinants, including inter-area contacts.

Writing when he did, Bastian showed great perspicacity in grasping the essentials of culture in its relations to man, geography, and history. Under the guise of an obsolete terminology we recognize familiar concepts: the elemental ideas stand for the original nature of man, the folk-ideas for cultural patterns (Teggart's idea-systems), the geographical provinces for culture areas.

Clarity, to be sure, was not one of Bastian's virtues. His elemental ideas remained exasperatingly vague and were in time elevated by Bastian's interpreters to the status of mystical entities. It is, however, clear that Bastian thought well of *homo sapiens*, and that to him man's original nature was richer in absorptive power and creativeness than are the denuded psyches of Watson's infants or those of the poor-witted morons postulated by the diffusionists. The folk-ideas also remained hazy. We hear nothing of the mechanisms which engendered them, nor much about their ways of behaving. But they were *folk-ideas* — that is, attitudes, concepts, and procedures grounded in the mind of man but given definite form by social determinants. The geographical provinces in which folk-ideas took shape were not worked out by Bastian with any degree of precision, but again he must be given credit for perceiving that cultural patterns possess definite local reference, and that geographical as well as historical factors co-operate in their making. Bastian, however, tended to dogmatism here: he vastly exaggerated the specific role of physical environment, and thought of historical contacts in terms both too precise and too narrow, his idea being that such contacts were predetermined by geographical position (a concept revived by Teggart in his *Processes of History*).<sup>1</sup>

The essential sanity of Bastian's psychological, geographical, and historical perspective is also reflected in his attitude towards the problem of diffusion versus independent development, a problem the scope of which was barely adumbrated in Bastian's day. He was satisfied to affirm the universality of *both* processes and their basic

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 89 sqq.

significance for the growth of culture, leaving the working-out of particular instances to other students.

*Psychological Postulates of Evolutionism.* — The classical evolutionists, as a group, were speculators, but not methodologists; they chanced upon their methods rather than deliberately selected them. Even Spencer, in the face of the external coherence of his system and its apparent logical severity, neglected to offer any theoretical justification of some of the salient features of his theory of cultural development. He claimed, for example, that culture evolved as an integral unit, and then proceeded to demonstrate the evolution, not of culture, but of ceremonial institutions, industrial and military institutions, and so on. Nor did it occur to him that it was theoretically indispensable either to prove that these evolving aspects of culture were definitely correlated, in which case his original concept of an evolving culture might have been saved; or to claim, at best, that the separate aspects of culture evolved, and then to inquire how these evolving series were interrelated and how culture as a whole behaved. The use of the comparative method was common to all evolutionists, but one would search their writings in vain for a single serious attempt to justify this procedure.

It can, I think, be shown that the psychological assumptions implied in evolutionism were throughout either erroneous or inadequate, and that the theory of cultural evolution in its classical form, even if valid from other standpoints, could be condemned on this ground alone.

To make this clear let us examine the basic concepts of evolutionism: the psychic unity of man, the three tenets — uniformity of cultural developments, their gradual and progressive character —, the comparative method, the use of survivals, and the rationalism and individualism of the evolutionist's interpretation of cultural origins.

In positing the psychic unity of man, the evolutionists, following in the tracks of pre-evolutionists like Waitz and Bastian, were on the right path. Man is one, meaning by this not only physio-psychological unity, but also availability for culture. We need not go here into the question of the potential equality of the races,<sup>1</sup> for is it not a commonplace of anthropology that the most striking cultural differences are found among peoples of one race: in America, the Eskimos and Mayas or the Californians and the Peruvians; in Africa, the Kaffirs of the south, the Baganda or Bahima of the east, and the Ewe or Yoruba of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 389 sqq. and 407 sqq.

the west; in Asia, the migratory herders of the steppes and tundras and the Chinese? In this matter of psychic unity the more critical theorists of the post-evolutionary period often exhibited less acumen than did the evolutionists, as when Lévy-Bruhl attempted to draw a sharp line between the pre-logical mystical mentality of the savage and the rational objectivity of the modern, an attitude which contrasts unfavourably with Spencer's assertion that the savage, though rational, is misguided by deficient knowledge.

In their three major tenets the evolutionists were less fortunate. The tenet of uniformity has, of course, been shown to be at variance with the facts of history; but it is also built on a false psychology. There may be such a thing as a limitation of possibilities in developments which keeps the figure of actual cultural variants below the abstractly possible one. This limitation, however, is rarely stringent; room is left for a kaleidoscopic variety of cultural growths the dynamic components of which must be sought in the versatility of the human mind plus the play of historical accident. If, this notwithstanding, there were to be uniformity, it could only be explained by some quasi-organic drive which would keep the traffic of historical events ever and ever along the same highway. Avowedly or by implication, the evolutionists did postulate just such a quasi-organic drive or urge to account for the alleged uniformity of evolutionary processes and stages. But, if so, it is an urge without a locus. Surely it is not in individuals. Where, then, is it?

So also with the gradual changes, perceptible or even imperceptible. In the light of history, they must at best be supplemented by frequently occurring spurts, precipitations, cataclysmic changes. In technology, art, philosophy, science, as well as in the domain of social, political, and economic phenomena, the record of events can be read only one way. In this case psychology strikes deeper at the evolutionary concept — gradual change — than does history if superficially analysed. Changes could come gradually if there were no resistance to the pressure of the factors or forces which prompt change. In the absence of resistance cultural causes would achieve their effects smoothly and without friction or delay. This, however, is never the case. The inertia of the individual psyche is ever reluctant to yield to pressure, for every change means breaking a habit, and habits notoriously stick. This individual inertia is enhanced by the much more ponderous inertia of institutionalism which, at its points of operation, is also psychological. The result is that every change in culture is pre-

ceded by a period of delay during which there is an accumulation of those factors which prompt the impending change. When cumulative pressure (or, psychologically, summation of stimuli) finally overcomes resistance, the change comes — with a spurt. Nor is this a purely temporal phenomenon, a mere delay in time. If that were so, the change, when finally achieved, might after all be slight, even “imperceptible.” But what actually happens, as just indicated, is that during the delay, while pressure works upon resistance, the factors prompting the change *accumulate*; so, when the change comes, it does so with a bang. We know from the study of the learning process that it is not gradual, but jerky. So also with culture, for, from one angle, culture is learning. And the psychology also is the same: the delay comes from inertia due to pre-existing habits, only that in the case of culture the inertia of the individual is greatly reinforced by institutional inertia. This lengthens the delay and adds to the explosive character of the change when it does come.<sup>1</sup>

The weakest of the three evolutionary tenets is the last: the notion of progress as a constant or necessary feature of evolution. The concept that culture progresses as a unit implies an overrating of the organic integration of culture. As a matter of fact, this integration rests on the psychic assimilation and interpenetration of the different aspects of a culture. It is a process always going on, never complete. But even though applied to the separate aspects of culture, after the fashion of the less extreme evolutionists, the concept of progress breaks down through the implied disregard of the psychology of values, especially if the progress is conceived as necessary. For progress is a valuational concept, it is *change in the direction of improvement*. But what is improvement? Where is the standard? Who is the arbiter? If the concept of progressive change is to be preserved at all, it must become particularistic and critical, cognizance being taken of the valuational perspective.<sup>2</sup>

Passing to the methods of the evolutionists, it must be noted that the often criticized weakness of the “comparative method” which consists in tearing beliefs and customs from their historical settings

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<sup>1</sup> There are also some positive reasons why cultural changes are often more nearly like de Vries's mutations than like the microscopic changes of the Darwinians, but it would carry us too far to go into this here.

<sup>2</sup> To use the term “progress” so as to cover all cultural change, as is done by Oppenheimer (see his essay “History and Sociology” in Ogburn and Goldenweiser: *Social Sciences*, etc., p. 223), is, in my opinion, going too far towards an abrogation of this time-honoured concept which, if used properly, may still do good service in social theory.

and using them *in vacuo* as it were, is at bottom a psychological error. For the validity of the concept "historical setting" rests on the presence of psychological threads which hold the different elements of a culture together. To untie or disregard these threads is to denude the cultural element, to deprive it of the flesh and blood of reality. Similarly, when the evolutionist makes retrospective interpretations of "survivals," he places undue stress on the "fitness" of an element with reference to a definite cultural pattern — the importance of the mother's brother, for example, in matriarchal society — and minimizes the multiplicity of settings into which such a feature may fit, more or less.

One of the strangest features of evolutionary philosophy was its rampant individualism. When Spencer and Tylor, Sir John Lubbock (later Lord Avebury), Frazer, and Hartland were penning their first contributions to evolutionary sociology, the air was full of folk-psychological speculations; much was said about the group mind, about suggestion, imitation, and crowd psychology. But the pristine individual in the evolutionist's cradle remained in a state of isolation truly splendid, while culture was made to emerge from his solitary mind like Pallas Athena from the head of Zeus. The family, clan, religious society, tribe, simply did not exist as contributory factors to culture origins. The individual mind was represented as facing external conditions, nature; and to these it reacted, innocent of all guidance or restraint on the part of social norm or cultural pattern. This hypothetical mind, moreover, seems to have contained ideas and intellectual processes, but no emotions, conations, images, desires, or fantasies. It is not surprising, therefore, that the speculative constructs of the evolutionist were as plausible and self-consistent as they were artificial and unreal. For consistency and plausibility are not of the stuff that history is made of; instead, it is wont to grab the strange and peculiar and mould these into the commonplace.<sup>1</sup>

*Psychological Postulates of Wundt's Folk-Psychology.* — Against the classical evolutionists the charge can justly be made that they were

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<sup>1</sup> It will be readily conceded that the picture here drawn of man in the evolutionist's garden of Eden is extreme. It fits only the left-wing evolutionists, such as Spencer and Frazer. One emotion, in particular, was often conceded to primitive man by the evolutionists, including Spencer: fear. This was made the most of in connexion with religious origins. It must also be remembered that when writing of primitive man in a general way, the evolutionists often referred to other psychic traits besides ideas. The point here emphasized is that they made no use of this insight in building their theories.

often unaware of the import of their methods and assumptions. No such slackness can be attributed to Wilhelm Wundt who brought to his folk-psychological speculations a mind deeply steeped in theoretical wisdom and methodological insight. Whatever faults Wundt's thought may possess, superficiality and naïveté are not among them. A carefully elaborated theoretical point of view runs, like a scarlet thread, through his entire system. A psychologist first and foremost, Wundt took pains to deduce his folk-psychology and historical philosophy from the principles developed in his psychology. In the centre of his psychological system stood his synthetic view of mental processes, which was superimposed upon the analytical view of the associationist school to which the evolutionists belonged. Hence the concept of *apperception* which became the operative unit of the synthetic approach, in place of "perception" and "idea" which had done similar service for the analytical approach. In the apperceptive process the mind (or part of it) faces a new perception or experience not as a mass of "ideas," but as a mass of organized or integrated "ideas." This gives the pre-existing mental state an advantage, as it were, over the new-comer from the outside world. The latter is not merely absorbed and incorporated, but also transformed or re-created: a *creative synthesis* takes place. A new mental product arises which is not merely a sum or juxtaposition of the old and the new, but an interpenetration of the two, a process in which the old plays the predominant part. It gives colour to the new whole and is the creative agent in the synthesis.

Thus the pre-existing mental mass is far from a passive participant in the process: it is an active agency. An element of conation or will is involved. Therein lies the root of Wundt's voluntarism and anti-intellectualism (another thrust at the evolutionists!). On this foundation Wundt built his concept of *psychic causality* in which the effect, rather than equal its cause — after the pattern of physical causality — is always *greater* than the cause, to use this inadequate term: the effect is the cause transformed.<sup>1</sup>

When so much is said, a new foundation is laid for a folk-psychology. For whence does an individual derive his apperceptive mass? From his experience? Yes, but this experience, even though it refer to the external world of nature, is shot through with social factors. For either it is acquired in the company of others or it is an experience of

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<sup>1</sup> The question of the advisability of using the term "cause" for two radically different concepts need not be gone into here.

that company, or — if the individual experiences in solitude — the group, these “others,” are already stamped into his soul, they have become an integral part of his apperceiving self and make it what it is.

Wundt made the most of this insight. He realized that, with reference to the individual, the group (“the others”) was the carrier of habit, of tradition. It set the pattern and held the individual to it. And patterns, historically transmitted, are culture. Culture, then, Wundt taught, was a group product, a creation of the *folk*. As a culture-maker the individual was part of the folk, and only for purposes of analysis could he be separated from it, and then only with difficulty. This was particularly true, held Wundt, of *language, myth, and custom*. But by the time Wundt had elaborated this triplet (in a ten-volume work), it had come to embrace language, art, myth, religion, ceremonialism, social and political organization, and law. A fairly complete list, this, of the contents of culture, it will be seen, with the single and singular omission of its material or technological aspect.

This omission of the physical basis of culture from so comprehensive a system is significant as well as curious. It explains why Wundt's stupendous contribution should have impressed the environmentalists and economic interpreters of history as so much elaborate talk about nothing (shadows, phantoms, epiphenomena). This is the price Wundt paid for being too much of a psychologist. It is as if he had become so greatly absorbed in what the mind did with experience that he turned his back upon the external sources of experience. In the mind, to be sure, he found the whole of culture, even material culture — but not its materials. And it is the materials that hold man in their grip, dominate economic life and industry, and tie culture to the physical environment, to plant and animal nature, the earth, and climate.<sup>1</sup>

In his folk-psychology Wundt applied the concept of creative synthesis to the wider field of culture. He finds here a “mutation of motives” and a “heterogeny of ends.” Motives and ends or purposes are in a state of constant flux, mutation, transformation. Social units assume new functions, which functions give rise to new social forms. Words and phrases acquire meanings not even adumbrated in the original use. Religious customs become prototypes of moral rules or of play-techniques, while moral precepts acquire religious sanction. Objective relationships become symbols, while symbols are material-

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<sup>1</sup> When Wundt in the third volume of his *Logik* expatiates at length upon the theories and methods of Marx and his followers, he still finds it unnecessary to explain how and why it is that his own theoretical edifice starts in mid air, as it were, and remains there.



ized in art or objectified in social form. Objects of use come to function as adornment, while things of art are put to use. Virtues turn vices, and vices virtues. In the psychic domain in which culture dwells, there is a constant up and down, a shifting and moving, interpenetration of meanings, transvaluation of values.<sup>1</sup>

This contribution of Wundt's to the dynamics of cultural life went over the heads of the evolutionists, the diffusionists shut their doors (material all too material!) against it, and even the critical anthropologists who should have known better, were too busy disposing of their predecessors to do it justice. It is to be hoped that the superior discernment embodied in Wundt's concept will not be wasted on social thinkers during the present period of mutation of motives and purposes in the entire field of the sciences of society.

It was almost inevitable that Wundt, having grasped the complexities of the individual mind, the mobility of the cultural process, and the significance of values and valuations in all that concerns man, should have taken the view of history which his writings reveal. He often paid his respects to the role of historical accident and turned his back resolutely against the concept of law in history, against, therefore, all forms of historical determinism and dogmatic stage-building, including strict evolutionism.<sup>2</sup>

Instead he elaborated a set of *principles* for history as a theoretical discipline, or *trends* for history as fact. These concepts were calculated to save the student of history and culture from the discouraging fate of being confronted with an utter chaos.

But, for the purposes of this essay, we have followed Wundt far enough.

*Psychological Postulates of Diffusionism.* — Historic ideas, however fructifying in their prime, have a way of crystallizing into dogmas. Thence, after a more or less valiant struggle, they pass on to their doom.

Such also was the fate of evolutionism. Its well-nigh cynical disregard of factual evidence, its methodological enormities, went too far. . . . And then diffusionism arose. Ratzel gave the new approach

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> That, withal, Wundt himself should have approached evolutionism more closely than he intended is another illustration of the only too common disparity between profession and performance even when both lie in the intellectual domain. But if he was thus misguided, the responsibility did not rest with a vicious psychology.

its first impetus. He became interested in tracing historical connexions between cultural similarities. By predilection and training a student of the concrete and material, he applied himself to such problems as the geographical distribution of the African bow and arrow or of plate armour. With the theory and methodology of diffusion he did not make much headway. Other students picked up his work where he left it, and before long it became clear that the theory of diffusion could be used as a weapon in the fight against uncritical evolutionism. If objects, customs, ideas, could be imported from without and incorporated in a tribal culture — and it was easy to show that they could be — what became of the evolutionist's organic urge, his cultural growth from within, his stage-building? At every point he was now confronted with the question: What is the historical home of this or that custom or thing? If it does not belong where you find it, your first task is to trace it to its source, and surely you can no longer deal with it as if it were a natural and inevitable outgrowth of your local culture.

The air grew thick with concrete studies of diffused things and ideas. The fight over independent development versus diffusion was well under way, when a young German student, F. Graebner, a historian by training, entered the arena. He became the first full-fledged diffusionist, building a theory of diffusion upon the negatives of evolutionism. Psychic unity? Yes! But you cannot do anything with it. It collapses when confronted with cultural diversities; how, then, can it explain similarities? Man's inventive capacity? Yes, but it is top-heavy with limitations. By and large, inventions come hard, man is lazy, and if anyone claims that a tricky thing was invented twice, he must prove it. Independent invention, moreover, generally rests upon assumptions, whereas diffusion can be demonstrated. Every day brings new evidence of its actuality. Uniformity in cultural developments? History belies it. The task of the ethnologist, therefore, is that of the historian. If he is to get anywhere, he must apply himself to tracing cultural connexions, instead of dreaming lazily about man's genius, similar ideas springing up in twins and triplets, and cultures everywhere passing through beautifully symmetrical stages.

In his anti-evolutionary enthusiasm Graebner neglected to set his own house in order. Diffusionism, as fully developed in his *Methode der Ethnologie*, becomes as dogmatic and uncritical as evolutionism itself. Many of its errors, moreover, are also traceable to wrong psychological assumptions, avowed or implied.

It is, of course, true that man's inventiveness can be exaggerated.

Evidence is not lacking, however, that his mind is ever actively at work. Apart from the lessons to be derived from the study of children, diffusion itself supplies confirmatory data. If man were as incapable as the diffusionist would make him, diffusion itself would be impossible. It takes mind, adaptability, inventiveness, to adopt objects and ideas, to assimilate them, use them, transform them. The diffusionist himself, moreover, never tires of insisting, when arguing against parallelism, that the world is full of different things. But these *different* things — and they are indeed many — had to be invented. In arguing against the independent invention of similarities the diffusionist leans heavily upon the admittedly independent invention of differences. The minds that could originate these differences thereby qualified for the origination of similarities, unless some other grounds can be adduced to show why this was not likely to occur.

Realizing the crucial importance of the appraisal of cultural similarities, Graebner establishes his two criteria: one qualitative, the other quantitative. The first refers to formal similarities, the second to their number. But in his estimate of our ability to pass judgment in such matters Graebner disregards the evidence of psychology. Even when comparing material objects we tend to be influenced by training, interest, point of view. Here, however, the measuring-rod can be of assistance in eliminating or at least minimizing subjectivism. In the social and mental domains there is no such mechanical corrective. Here our judgments are notoriously vacillating, or, what is worse, categorical but subject to grave error. Who would presume to claim objectivity or detailed accuracy for his estimate of the degree or significance of the similarity between two forms of art, religion, morality, or thought? To this Graebner might reply, truthfully enough, that his system is largely built up on the basis of material culture. But this defence could be readily turned into an indictment.

If, then, estimates of similarity are at best vague and often subjective, the impression derived from a formal inspection of cultural features should be supplemented by other evidence, such as geographical location and the feasibility or actuality of historical contact. If this much is admitted, the next link in Graebner's argumentative chain is also shattered: namely, his concept of *Ferninterpretation*, interpretation at a distance, according to which judgments of similarity must stand, whatever the distance between two regions compared.

When viewing culture in its relation to time as well as to its constituent elements, Graebner commits equally grave psychological errors.

His method of characterizing a culture consists in cataloguing its component features, material (mostly that!), social, and spiritual. This has been designated as a mechanical procedure, in a derogatory sense. Rightly so, for no cognizance is here taken of the associations, symbolizations, interpenetrations, of traits, which resolve a culture into trait complexes and combine these into a more or less integrated whole. Curiously enough, Graebner holds that in intertribal contacts culture acts as a unit or nearly so—if one trait is diffused, others follow, necessarily—a view more nearly consistent with the ideas of Graebner's more psychologically minded critics than with his own. Blind to the ties which hold cultural features together in a local complex, Graebner cannot help realizing that they do stick together; then he proceeds to assume that they continue to do so under conditions of transfer, when, as a matter of fact, they break up. If Graebner realized that these ties are psychological, he would have no difficulty in understanding why they loosen under conditions of cultural transfer: psychological ties stand for human carriers; when the latter are left behind, the ties vanish; the cultural trait, thus released, now acts as an independent unit, until enmeshed in other ties in its new home.

Similarly, when Graebner treats cultural features as if they were immutable, it is his psychological blind spot which prevents him from seeing things in their true perspective. Here also the fact that Graebner is primarily a specimen ethnologist provides a partial justification. Objects of material culture are, relatively speaking, immutable, particularly if they remain buried underground. I say "relatively," for the use of an object may change with time, and with the use, its cultural orientation. As to the traits of social and spiritual culture, a little spiritual communion with Leipzig, where Wundt was teaching cultural dynamics at the time Graebner was formulating his own system, would have saved the diffusionist much futile theorizing.<sup>1</sup>

*Psychological Postulates of the American School of Ethnology.*—The work of some American anthropologists during the last fifteen or twenty years has often been characterized as critical, historical, and psychological. In the few pages that follow, an attempt will be made to justify this reputation, especially with reference to the psychological perspectives of our work.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For further criticisms of Graebner, from a more strictly anthropological angle, see pp. 145 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> In fairness, I want to add that the anthropologists referred to, constituting the so-called "Boas School," do not hold a monopoly of the theoretical and methodological principles presently

By and large, dogmatic environmentalism has found little favour in America. While the importance of physical environment as a limiting and directing factor in cultural development is conceded, it is realized that form or pattern — and what is culture if not that? — is but weakly correlated with environment and in no sense determined by it. Psychologically, Wissler's point (in his older work) is of special interest. He draws attention to the fact that environment, without determining a particular adjustment, does call for *some* adjustment, some cultural solution of the environmental problem. After this has been accomplished, and provided the environment remains the same, the solution reached tends to persist, often in the face of better possible and even known solutions.

While the ubiquitousness of independent development and diffusion is, of course, granted, both processes are accepted as heuristic principles to be tested in particular instances. This implies the unconditional rejection of the sweeping generalizations and methodological vagaries, of both evolutionism and diffusionism.<sup>1</sup> Both concepts, moreover, independent origination "from within" and diffusion, have been enriched by a number of subsidiary concepts.

The concept of *convergence*,<sup>2</sup> first introduced into theoretical ethnology by Ehrenreich, has been mainly elaborated in America, so far on a limited scale. It is being pointed out that, while cultural parallelisms in chronologically extended series are at best rare, convergent developments are common, thus bringing about similarities where there were differences or less marked similarities. Some convergences, in technique, form (in objects), or art, are objective; others are psychological, functional. If Wundt's principle of motivational and purposive mutation is accepted, it becomes easy to see how many such convergences will come about.

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to be discussed. If space permitted, much work done by our European colleagues would deserve analysis in this connexion. Among descriptive monographs with theoretical leanings, to mention only a few, we have Rivers's contributions to the ethnology of the Torres Straits islanders, and his *The Todas*, C. S. Seligman's works on the Melanesians and the Veddahs, Martin's on the Malays, Spieth's on the African Ewe, Pechuel-Loesche's on other west Africans, Ehrenreich's, Von den Steinen's, Max Schmidt's on a large number of South American tribes, Malinowski's admirable *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, and so on to a considerable length. The same men and others, such as Thurnwald, Vierkandt, Haberlandt, Montelius, Hocart, Marett, have contributed on the highest level to anthropological theory and methodology, rejecting one-sided evolutionism and diffusionism and doing full justice to the critical, historical, and psychological standpoints.

<sup>1</sup> This point deserves emphasis in view of the recent tendency, in certain quarters, to class American ethnologists with the classical evolutionists.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 35 sqq.

In connexion with diffusion, the psychological setting of the process is constantly being emphasized. To state that an object, custom, idea, has travelled from one place to another is to give but a skeleton of the problem. The situation bristles with psychological issues: Where did it start? Yes! But also: Why? How did it travel? What happened to it on the way? When it arrived, how was it received? Did it remain a foreign curiosity? Was it assimilated, elaborated, transformed beyond recognition? One and all, psychological issues.

The concept of *culture area* is of interest both with reference to diffusion and from a wider historico-psychological standpoint. A culture area is Bastian's geographical province raised from a state of vagueness and abstraction to one of concreteness and relative precision. A culture area is characterized by a catalogue of traits or features, material, artistic, religious, ceremonial, social (so far like a Graebnerian culture), but also by the way such features are associated, interrelated, coloured by one another (an outlook quite beyond Graebner's horizon). Such culture *complexes* show remarkable tenacity and persistence in time. The further concept of a *culture centre*, arising from the attempt to find the locus of greatest incandescence of the culture of an area with a concomitant attenuation towards the periphery, has proved less serviceable. While attractive, it is also dangerous and seems difficult of application. The facts may be too complex for so simple a formulation.

The concept of *marginal area*, on the other hand, has been fully vindicated and opens up interesting theoretical problems with a distinct psychological reference. A marginal area is an area of transition (geographically intermediary) between one culture area and another. Now, it has been pointed out that a marginal area, if viewed objectively, comprises some cultural features belonging to two or more culture areas and, in this sense, is indeed marginal or transitional and less distinguishable as a separate entity. But psychologically a marginal area is a culture area, as good as any other, with its own associations and interpenetrations of traits.

Another concept which gained precision during the study of culture areas (although it had been elaborated and applied outside of this context) was that of culture *patterns*. It was observed that new features within a culture, whether of "inner" or "outer" origin, were rapidly drawn into the pre-existing scheme or configuration of traits and assimilated to these. The role of the pattern concept in cultural studies, useful though it has proved in the past, has not been

fully explored and is likely to prove even more quickening in the future.<sup>1</sup>

The study of culture areas, tribal clusters, and individual tribes in greatest detail and from all possible angles — a mode of procedure generally adopted by American and other ethnologists — is of interest also from another angle. The historical record of cultural anthropology is most fragmentary, and inevitably it will remain so for all time. As a consequence, whenever the anthropologist wants to turn historian, in the sense of a recorder and interpreter of chronologically consecutive events, he must learn to rely in part on speculative reconstruction as the only means available for filling in the gaps in the record. The evolutionist and his brother in sin, the diffusionist, have done this on a sweeping scale, and with dire results, largely on account of their daring but fateful disregard of the actualities of cultural life and of observable historical processes. The historian's data are ample; the difficulty of his task lies in criticism and selection. The anthropologist is much worse off: only too frequently, as we saw, his records are not there or are fragmentary in the extreme. Where, then, shall he turn for a perspective, for an opportunity to steep himself in cultural reality comparable in kind to this lost past record? This he finds in the study of contemporary primitive cultures in their natural historico-geographical settings. In doing this work he leans on the assumption — a psychological one — that the processes of culture remain essentially the same at all times. By identifying himself with this life of his "savage contemporaries" as thoroughly and sympathetically as may be, he becomes a culture expert. He gains a perspective which will stand him in good stead when historical gaps are to be filled in.

*Conclusion.* — Enough has been said, perhaps, to show how intimately the theories of cultural anthropology are interrelated with psychological insight — or the absence of it. The life of culture belongs to the psychological level. It is in the minds of men in society. If the nature of this level is misunderstood, an impetus is given to vicious methodology and one-sided or artificial theory. The historian and the anthropologist are students of life. Life is psychology. Abuse your psychology, and it will corrupt your history, your anthropology.

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<sup>1</sup> An obvious homology to the pattern concept in culture will be recognized in the *Gestalt* concept in psychology. Similar categories are encountered in the study of organisms and of crystals. All these concepts are again related to the concepts of form and system in the plastic arts and music, on the one hand, and in mathematics and logic, on the other. Unless we are badly misguided, a concept of the general type of pattern or *Gestalt* may yet come to mark an epochal advance in our conceptual explorations.

## J. Teggart's Approach to History





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IT MAY OR MAY NOT BE ACCIDENTAL THAT INTEREST IN THE SOCIAL sciences has in recent years received a mighty impetus. Books and articles on social and political theory, on democracy, the individual and the group, the state, the crowd, come from the press in well-nigh endless succession. The time, indeed, seems eminently ripe to reconsider our ideas of society and their application to life, for history has run amuck, and unless man interferes before it is too late, we may yet have to face the task of rebuilding the whole of civilization from the bottom up. As is usual in such situations, the more practical and immediate demands of the hour re-echo in the more remote realms of scientific thought and speculation. Thus, the relations of history and ethnology to other sciences, such as psychology and sociology, have been reconsidered by Lowie,<sup>1</sup> Hocart,<sup>2</sup> Wissler,<sup>3</sup> and Rivers.<sup>4</sup> Kroeber has turned his attention to the theoretical relation of the historical to the biological sciences.<sup>5</sup> Going still further, the same writer published a somewhat cryptic, but none the less interesting, catechism of historical theory and methodology,<sup>6</sup> which elicited a spirited reply from Haeberlin.<sup>7</sup> In a somewhat different context, I have pointed out the danger of over-emphasizing the purely conventional barriers between

<sup>1</sup> "Psychology and Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXI (1915), pp. 217-29.

<sup>2</sup> "Ethnology and Psychology," *Folk-lore*, Vol. LXXV (1915), pp. 115-38.

<sup>3</sup> "Psychological and Historical Interpretations for Culture," *Science*, Vol. XLIII (1916), pp. 193-201.

<sup>4</sup> "Sociology and Psychology," *Sociological Review*, Vol. IX (1916), pp. 1-13.

<sup>5</sup> "The Superorganic," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXIX (1917), pp. 163-213. See also the discussion by Sapir (*ibid.*, pp. 441-7) and Goldenweiser (*ibid.*, pp. 447-9).

<sup>6</sup> "The Eighteen Professions," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIX (1917), pp. 283-9.

<sup>7</sup> "Anti-Professions," (*ibid.*, pp. 756-9). Cf. also Allport: "The Group Fallacy in Relation to Social Science," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXIX (1924), pp. 688-707, and discussions by Bogardus and Goldenweiser (*ibid.*); Gillette: "Boundary Lines of Social Phenomena," *ibid.*, Vol. XXX (1925), pp. 585-94; Howerth: "What are Principles of Sociology?" *ibid.*, Vol. XXXI (1926), pp. 474-85; Kozlowski: "The Logic of Sociology," *ibid.*, Vol. XXXIII (1928), pp. 912-22; and Stern's important article: "Concerning the Distinction between the Social and the Cultural," *Social Forces*, Vol. VIII (1929), pp. 254-71.

the different social sciences, making this a point of departure for a general theoretical analysis of the elements of history and culture.<sup>1</sup> To those interested in this field Professor Teggart's little volume<sup>2</sup> comes as a welcome contribution. In more than one way the essay is timely and significant, while its contents will arouse in the mind of the student of culture (from an ethnological angle) frequent approval as well as equally emphatic disagreement. What the author purports to do — and of that larger endeavour the tiny volume before us is but a modest precursor — is to demonstrate “what sort of results might be obtained by a strict application of the method of science to the facts of history” (p. v). From another standpoint, the greater work will be “an attempt to do for history what biologists are engaged in doing for the history of the forms of life” (ibid.).

In the section “The Nature and Scope of the Inquiry” we are informed that “science is, fundamentally, a method of dealing with problems, and the initial step in any scientific undertaking is the determination of the problem to be investigated” (p. 1). The problem, then, in this humanistic inquiry, is to ascertain “how man everywhere has come to be as he is” (p. 5). This formulation becomes the author's *Leitmotiv*, and thus we find it repeated many times in the course of the discussion (e.g., on pp. 18, 25, 38, 90). Without much difficulty, in crisp and perfectly convincing statements, the author disposes of the physical, psychological, and climatic or environmental hypotheses which have at various times been advanced to account for the differences of the various types of man “as he has come to be.”<sup>3</sup> The upshot of the author's critique is that “It has not seemed necessary to the exponents of these views to show how the factors described could have produced the differences which we see around us” (p. 11).

In view of the tenacity with which the so-called economic interpretation of history still possesses the mind of man (as he has come to be), the author's censure on Marx's doctrine is particularly welcome. “He

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 5-32. See also discussions by Ellwood, *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XV (January 30, 1918); Teggart, *ibid.*, March 13; Sheldon, *ibid.*, July 5; Kroeber's article: “The Possibility of a Social Psychology,” *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXIII (1918), pp. 633-51. Haeberlin's acute analysis of Wundt: “The Theoretical Foundations of Wundt's Folk-Psychology,” *Psychological Review*, Vol. XXIII (1916), pp. 279-302, should also be consulted in this connexion.

<sup>2</sup> *The Processes of History* (1918). See the same author's “Prolegomena to History,” *University of California Publications in History*, Vol. IV, No. 3 (1916).

<sup>3</sup> It must be remembered that “man” in this discussion often stands for “civilization,” in its material as well as psychic manifestations.

[Marx] neither considered the entire field of economic activity in modern life," writes Teggart, "nor the conditions of labor in any other than the capitalistic form of society"; and again: "This theory . . . is based upon a limited view of the facts, and represents the projection of a single factor upon the complexity of human experience" (pp. 16-17). Follows a brief discussion and critique of the concept of progress, which is as unusual as it is just, leading up to this categorical statement: "If we look a little further, it will be to discover that human history is not unitary, but pluralistic; that what we are given is not one history, but many; and, that the concept of 'progress' is arrived at by the maintenance of a Europocentric tradition and the elimination from consideration of the activities of all peoples whose civilization does not at once appear as contributory to our own" (p. 24).

Rather than "create narratives based upon the selection of events which seem to us of importance in view of some unverified theory of progress," the author recommends that we "compare these several histories [of different peoples] with the object of ascertaining what it is they hold in common" (p. 25).

From this point on to the end of the first chapter the discussion takes us right to the kernel of the author's conception. Human history is here put on a level with "other fields of history, such as Astronomy, Geology and Biology" (p. 26), for "it comes to be seen that historical method is the same whatever the history investigated — whether that of the stellar universe, of the earth, of the forms of life upon the earth, or of man" (p. 33).

Moreover, the student of human history has a marked advantage over the historian of nature in so far as the former's record is definitely (or relatively definitely) chronologized.

It seems time to pause here, as the formulations towards the end of the chapter contrast strongly with the professions in the preface and the opening pages. We were told that the method of science was to be applied to human history, but further reading shows that the "method of science" is to be the method of the historic branches of the natural sciences, astronomy, geology, biology; for it will be admitted that these sciences, as well as the sciences of society, have historical and non-historical aspects.

The terms "scientific" and "scientific method" have acquired some of their current connotations from their association with the so-called exact sciences, such as physics, chemistry, mathematics, or that mathe-

matical branch of astronomy known as celestial mechanics. Scientific method in most general terms has thus come to mean one of two things: either (1) problem, working hypothesis, experimentation (under controlled conditions), acceptance or rejection of hypothesis, theory (sometimes designated as "principle" or "law"); or (2) theoretical formulation of a scheme or system of magnitudes, forces, and correlations which, when applied to the interpretation of a particular more or less complex set of facts and relations, proves a means of simplification or at least of consistent statement (this latter method being used, for example, in theoretical physics). It is true that some advocates of eugenics have proposed and to a degree carried out experiments somewhat after the fashion of the first of the above methods, whereas the second has been weakly adumbrated in some of the hypothetical constructs of modern ethnological diffusionists. But, all in all, there is no room in social science for either of the two characteristic "methods of science." These methods are obviously out of court when one deals with the historical aspects of society or with the historical branches of such natural sciences as astronomy, geology, or biology.

If one further inquires for the particular method of the natural-historical sciences which the author would attempt to emulate in his study, it readily appears that what he essays is the determination of constants. In this endeavour he will have with him all those whose minds are wont to be perturbed by the contemplation of the immensely complicated and apparently disorderly successions of historic happenings. But here there arises one further query. Suppose such a constant — nay, set of constants — were disclosed, thus greatly enhancing our insight into historical processes. Still, from what we know of history and of man (as he was and is), it is but reasonable to expect that these constants would not prove a complete rationale of history, but of certain more or less prominent aspects of it. Now, in the facts and successions constituting the subject-matter of the natural-historical sciences there also are discernible certain constants as well as certain variants; but it so happens that the variants in these cases do not interest us, or do so but slightly; fortunately so, for, as the author notes, we lack the means of reconstructing the minutiae of these processes or of chronologizing them. Not so in history. Without attempting to raise from well-deserved historical obscurity the proverbial death of a neighbour's cat, it is but fair to doubt whether the historical constants — if disclosed — would cover all that is theoretically interesting and humanly significant. To disregard such re-

sidual facts and successions would be to sacrifice reality to method; to accept them, on the other hand, would mean to assign to the method a relatively modest place as a heuristic tool in historical study.<sup>1</sup>

We may now proceed to an examination of the author's constants. The second chapter, on "The Geographical Factor in History," is devoted to a demonstration of what Teggart calls "the homogeneity of history." The thesis in the author's own words is as follows:

"The fundamental basis of argument for holding that the History of man everywhere is of the same fabric, does not rest upon the interconnections of events, but may be stated in the form that the varying experiences of human groups have been similarly conditioned by the varying aspects of the conformation of the globe. Man cannot escape the physical world in which he lives, nor its infinite diversification; this is obvious, but it will require some illustration to make clear the fact that the even-handed dominance of nature leads inevitably to widely different results in the lives of men" (pp. 44-5).

Now, "this close dependence of history upon the irregularities of the surface of the earth" (p. 47) is exemplified in "another aspect of homogeneity, which is, that the political organizations dealt with in History have all come into being at definite and restricted spots, from which, subsequently, they have expanded" (p. 48). It will thus be seen that the inquiry is henceforth limited "to the beginnings of political organization" (p. 49). Furthermore, "this determinant influence of routes has been dependent upon the presence of human beings . . . it comes into play only in case of the movement of peoples [migrations]. Hence the origin of these movements becomes a matter of primary importance, more particularly as the homogeneity of history is further exhibited in the dependence of these movements or migrations upon man's physical surroundings" (pp. 52-3). The environmental feature responsible for such migrations finally is shown to consist in destructive changes of climate (pp. 68-75).

The cycle of constants thus brought to light may now be schematized as follows: pressure of deficient food-supply brought about through destructive changes of climate; migration; friction with pre-existing populations at a geographically conditioned terminus of the route of

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<sup>1</sup> "It [our discussion] leaves us with the conviction that in view of the historical character of social facts we ought to be especially on guard not to accept as law that which merely seems to hold true of present or past social phenomena," writes Morris R. Cohen in his *Reason and Nature* (p. 345). The entire section, "The Historical Character of Social Facts" (*ibid.*, pp. 344-6), should be read in this connexion.

travel taken by the migration; emergence of political organization. This successive series is again resolvable into two causal constants: (1) the relation of migration to certain adverse climatic conditions; and (2) the relation of political organization to migration, plus certain specific geographical conditions.

In examining point 1,<sup>1</sup> it may be admitted from the outset that changes of climate destructive enough to make the discomforts of mass migration preferable to readjustment *in loco* would be likely to result in such migration. That precisely such climatic cataclysms will result in the destruction and mass migration of animals has often been hypothesized and described. Kropotkin has given us a vivid picture of these phenomena in the opening chapters of his *Mutual Aid*.

After Pumpelly's expedition, to which Teggart gives due credit, there remains no doubt that periods of desiccation in Turkestan were accompanied by migrations, evidently on a considerable scale. All this, however, does not justify us in designating the climate-migration sequence as a "constant." For does violent climatic change always cause migration and does migration follow from no other antecedents? While unable to answer the first query with any degree of assurance, I must reply to the second in the negative, in view of the vast areas of

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<sup>1</sup> Two subsidiary points in the author's argument must be met here. The first refers to the balance of population in primitive conditions, which, according to the author, "in normal stable conditions remains stationary . . . among primitive peoples there is no 'national increase' which would lead inevitably to migrations" (p. 64). In this connexion the prevalence and importance of infanticide are emphasized. Now, while it will be time enough to examine the author's evidence when it is produced, it may not be amiss to state right here that Teggart's assertion that "infanticide, the killing of new-born infants, has been practiced universally throughout the world" (p. 58) is, to my knowledge, not supported by ethnological experience. As to the alleged absence of the "natural increase" in primitive populations, it is worth notice that whereas in aboriginal Australia, the South Sea area, and the major part of the two Americas the density of population has for long periods remained on a level greatly below modern standards, the primitive populations of modern Africa or of ancient Peru and Yucatan have increased to a degree which, barring the populations of modern cities, may well stand comparison with many areas in civilization. The author's second point refers to the unlikelihood of migration on anything like a large scale unless the people are actually "driven"; for we learn that "man is prone to remain where he is, to fixity in ideas and in ways of doing things, and only through nature's insistent driving has he been shaken out of his immobility and set wayfaring upon the open road" (p. 76). To this is added Keane's somewhat absurd assertion that "most African negroes south of the equator, most Oceanic negroes (Melanesians and Papuans), all Australian and American aborigines have remained in their original habitats ever since what may be called the first settlement of the earth by man" (*sic!*). Without disputing in the least the faith in human inertia reflected in Keane's statement, and siding with Teggart's rejection of the hypothesis that "man is primarily a migratory, restless being" (p. 76), I confess to being but little impressed by specifications such as these in the face of the extant evidence for minor as well as major migrations provided by the linguistic map of North America, by traditional and convergent semi-historical material from the entire south-east of Africa, and by traditional, somatological, and general cultural data from the Papuan-Melanesian districts.

human migration to which reference was made above. That climatic changes should have been responsible, for instance, for the migrations of hordes of Athapascans from the interior of Canada along the Pacific coast and down to the pueblos of the South-West, there is, to my knowledge, no evidence whatsoever. The same applies to the Zulu migrations of the south-east of Africa. As to the migrations of the Papuans and Melanesians, what we know of their direction and extent discourages any climatological interpretation. The latter district, moreover, is flanked by two nuclei of migrations, the Malay and the Polynesian, which in extent and (for Polynesia) in complexity can scarcely be matched by any other migrations in human history. That primitive peoples, navigating what at best were flimsy vessels, should have succeeded in linking by a continuous chain of migrations the shores of Easter Island with those of Madagascar must be pronounced as truly remarkable; and it seems obvious that changes of climate had nothing whatsoever to do with these movements. Also, if it is objected that the numbers involved at any given time were small, one may well reply that the means of transportation available precluded the simultaneous movement of larger numbers, that, in proportion to the probable density of population, the few were not so few, and, finally, that where the few moved, the many might have moved also.

Before the causal sequence "migration-political organization" can be discussed, we must turn to the opening paragraph of the chapter "The Human Factor in History," in which the author's conception of political organization receives more precise formulation. "Political organization is a comparatively recent phenomenon . . ." (p. 79) reads the first sentence. Again: "Political organization is an exceptional thing, characteristic only of certain groups" (ibid.). Statements such as these are highly misleading. As an expression of the integrating tendency in society, when contrasted with the differentiating tendency of social organization (in the narrow sense), political organization is as old as the latter and, in a sense, as old as society itself. As far back as the student's eye can reach, man recognized, unconsciously though it may have been, the sovereignty of the group, speaking a common language (or dialect), occupying a more or less definitely circumscribed territory, having within that territory certain privileges (denied to outsiders), and sharing together certain local customs and traditions. This sovereignty often expresses itself in the prestige and influence wielded by the tribal old men or by a chief or chiefs. In later periods the territorial expanse, the numerical strength, and the functional



integration of the tribe or tribal cluster conspicuously increase. It is true that certain of the administrative and economic functions of the modern state are but weakly represented in those primitive political aggregates, if, indeed, they are represented at all. This, however, is a question of a different order. The political organization itself, as an inherent attribute of all human groups, is there nevertheless. It is therefore also erroneous to contrast, with the author, "primitive" and "civilized" groups of men by stating that "among the former, the individual identifies himself by particularizing his blood-relationships, whereas, in the latter, the individual defines his status in terms of relation to a given territory" (p. 80). The territorial organization of the modern state, with its manifold functions, does stand out as something foreign to primitive society, but the contrast is mitigated when comparison is made, not with the kinship grouping, but with the tribal political unit, with its territorial, linguistic, and cultural peculiarities. The kinship organization of primitive society, on the other hand, should properly be juxtaposed to the modern family organization, with its radiating circle of blood relatives. When comparison is made on this basis, it will, I think, be recognized that the territorial political unit belongs to primitive as well as modern society, whereas the family is perhaps not less important in the modern territorial state than the clan, gens, family, etc. are in the primitive political unit. It will, moreover, be observed that in both instances some functions of these kinship groups are contingent upon their inclusion in the political unit,<sup>1</sup> while they also possess other functions inherent in their character as kin (or blood) groups.

If, then, it is accepted that political organization is inherent in society, migration has patently no relation to the fact. In fairness to the author, however, let us glance for a moment at forms of political organization coming nearer to those with which he would specifically deal. The reference is to primitive political systems of an uncommon degree of integration and centralization. These occur in three wide geographical areas: parts of North America, a large part of Bantu and Sudanese Africa, and Polynesia. The political form indigenous,

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<sup>1</sup> A possible objection might be raised to the above argument on the ground that "political organization" has here been given a different connotation from that adhered to by the author. The real issue, however, is not terminological. If it is possible to show, as in the above excursion, that certain features of political organization in the modern sense (the "State" of history) are shared by human aggregates down to remotest antiquity, the "emergence of political organization" (in the modern sense) does no longer appear as so epochal an event of world history, and the "processes" that would account for its emergence must share in this change of perspective.

albeit rare, in North America is the confederacy, that of the Iroquois being best known. It involves, of course, a considerable degree of integration of functions on the part of the constituent tribes. Supreme authority is lodged, not in one ruling head, but in a body of semi-elected, semi-hereditary chieftains with strictly limited powers. The African state approaches the Eurasian form much more closely: here the state territory is often considerable and comprises hundreds of thousands or even millions of individuals; the centralization of administrative functions is marked; the state is headed by a king, hereditary, sacred in person, owner of the state land, absolute master over the life and death of his subjects, and legislator, after a fashion. In Polynesia the territorial and populational proportions are again reduced to the more primitive level, but here also there is a king or high chief whose person is sacred and whose prestige is tremendous; without being a legislator, he wields the almost equivalent power of the imposition of *taboo*.

Should one look about for any possible connexion of these political structures with migrations, the following results would appear. In America, the tribes of the Iroquois are known to have resided in their approximate locations at the formation of the league long before that event occurred; also, extensive migrations in that continent, some of great magnitude (as noted before), did not result in the germination of political structures on a larger scale. In Africa, where the south-eastern area of migration, mentioned above, coincides with the presence of centralized states, such as that of the Zulu Kaffirs, no conspicuous migrations have been recorded in other much larger sections of the aboriginal continent, where similar states are equally common. In Polynesia, finally, there is correspondence between integrated political structures and an area of vast migrations; but next door to that area, in the Papuan-Melanesian district, not inconsiderable migrations have failed to bring about similar political results.

In the light of the above considerations, one will, I trust, hesitate to ascribe determining force to migrations, as such, in relation to political organization, as such; even though Professor Teggart might succeed in showing that there exists a fairly constant nexus between a certain type of migrations and the emergence of modern or more strictly historical states.

Before proceeding, there is another point made by the author, with reference to the relation of kindred to political organization, which must be met here. The statement runs as follows:

"To comprehend the situation fully, we may begin by saying that kindred organization, in whatever form it may assume, reflects the natural facts of human generation. What follows from this is a commonplace of the study of primitive man which must be constantly borne in mind, for kindred organization implies the unquestioned and unremitting dominance of the group over the individual, and this leads to the tenacious and uncompromising maintenance of customary ways and ideas. It will thus be seen that the despotism of custom negatives the idea that kindred organization could have been given up voluntarily, or exchanged, after deliberation, for something invented or considered better. The change, as I have pointed out, has been forced upon men at certain geographical points, determined by the physical distribution of land and water, and by a series of exigencies which go back to specific changes in climate within a definite area of the earth's surface. Furthermore, the immediate occasion of the break-up of kindred groups has been the collision and conflict, at the termini of routes, which have ensued from the migrations of men . . ." (pp. 84-5).

This conception is perhaps the most surprising and least acceptable in the entire volume. There is something quaintly humorous in the idea of these magical geographical termini at which, again and again, time-worn traditions and customs, including kindred organization itself, are shed like old scales, to make room for individualism, political organization, and the modern world. One fears that the "migration-political organization" constant might turn top-heavy if to its other burdens is added this one of the break-down of kinship; for history, after all, is not wont to indulge in anything quite so alluringly romantic, and when she does, she does not repeat herself.

Our three primitive areas with relatively high political organizations may incidentally serve as illustrations of possible types of historical relation between social and political units. Among the Iroquois, political consolidation was achieved through a double integration, of tribal units, on the one hand, and of clans, on the other. While the formerly autonomous tribal units lost much of their independence in the course of this process, the clan units do not seem to have been similarly affected: these remained in full possession of multifarious functions, notwithstanding the extension of some of these to homologous clans throughout the league. In Africa, the socio-political systems present the curious picture of gentile organizations of obviously great antiquity overlaid by political structures of more recent origin. The

gentes, moreover, have undergone mutation in various ways. Originally the gentes could not have been more populous than was compatible with a society based on live kinship bonds. Subsequently the gentes grew so large, often comprising thousands of persons, that their kinship character became of necessity much attenuated. Many gentes, again, have assumed functions associated with the requirements of the political system, functions which originally must have been foreign to these units. The kinship organizations of Africa are evidently on the way of passing into something which is no longer a kinship organization. In Polynesia, again, the clan basis of society, traces of which survive, has been superseded almost entirely by local units which here constitute the minor divisions of the political aggregates. As to the Eurasian political organizations, finally, with which Professor Teggart is primarily concerned, no proof is forthcoming that clans or gentes were once universal here. In some districts these units did, in all likelihood, exist, but it is highly improbable that these kinship systems should have persisted up to the late date of the inception of the great historical states. Most of these systems must have passed out long before, nor is the only possible alternative to be found in the assumption that they "could have been given up voluntarily, or exchanged, after deliberation" (1).

The remaining part of the chapter on "The Human Factor" contains some of the most suggestive ideas of the book. One feels that in a future elaboration of his study the author will be able to make an impressive case for his thesis concerning the cultural significance of the detached individual and the nature and behaviour of idea-systems. Some brief comments will suffice at this time.

Turning once more to those conflicts at the terminal points of migrations with which we are already familiar, the author proceeds: "The cardinal point is that the conflict, in breaking up the older organization, liberated the individual man, if but for a moment, from the dominance of the group, its observances, its formulae, and its ideas. Briefly, a situation was created in which the old rites and ceremonies could not be performed, one in which the old rules of action were manifestly inadequate, and hence one in which the individual became, in some measure, a law unto himself. This, at bottom, is the fact upon which all history turns" (p. 86).

And, again: "Most significant of all, the central feature of transition is not merely the substitution of territory for blood-relationship as the basis of unity in human groups, but the emergence of individu-

ality and of personal self-assertion, and hence it follows that human advance rests ultimately upon the foundation of individual initiative and activity " (p. 98).

By contrast with this, the conditions in primitive society are sketched in the following words: "So completely was the individual subordinated to the community that art was just the repetition of tribal designs, literature the repetition of tribal songs, and religion the repetition of tribal rites " (pp. 86-7).

And, once more: "The traditional ideas entertained have, in general, been transmuted into customary actions and ways of doing things. So, religious ideas are concentrated in rites and observances, and explanations of natural phenomena are embodied in symbolic ceremonies. In short, the whole body of custom and tradition represents ideas fixed in action. Since these modes of action, which are associated with the essential activities of life, must be prosecuted with rigid adherence to precedent, it is evident that any reconsideration of the validity of the ideas upon which they rest is practically out of the question. Primitive man does not 'think,' he performs definitely prescribed actions under the eye of the community, which, in turn, is vitally concerned in the exactness with which the repetition of formula or ceremony is carried out " (p. 108).

It would be futile to dispute the profound significance for progress of the free creative individual, to which these passages bear testimony. Also, the contrast, from this standpoint, between modern and primitive conditions is, in the main, correctly drawn. But when we are told that the birth of individualism is to be sought at the terminal points of migrations, clamorous with conflict, agreement must be withheld. However tradition-ridden primitive society may be, stereotyped social determinism represents, after all, but one of its aspects. Even a superficial survey of primitive art, religion, and mythology would suffice to show that primitive man, over-socialized though he may be, does not merely draw to pattern, repeat by rote ancestral stories, and mutter time-worn incantations. While the range of individual initiative is certainly limited, and pattern is more conspicuous than innovation, there is creativeness in art, religion, myth-telling and myth-making, in which men and women participate. That primitive man does not "think" is as little true as is the obsolete dogma that he lacks the power of abstraction, or that his language knows no grammar. It must also be remembered that, like so many others before him, Professor Teggart, in portraying primitive man, disregards those matter-

of-fact activities which, in reality, constitute to him, as they do to us, the very core of the struggle of life. Apart from song and dance, prayer, incantation and sacred rite, myth-telling, painting, carving, and embroidering, there goes on from day to day the serious and hard business of hunting and fishing, building of traps and snares, houses and canoes, making of pots and weaving of baskets, spinning and sewing, fashioning of weapons and putting them to practical use. All this hard and serious business the descriptions of which fill large sections of our ethnological monographs, is carried on from day to day, by men and by women, in complete oblivion of the supernatural and frequent disregard of the æsthetic; it is carried on with the senses pitched high and the mind alert, observing, testing, improving, inventing, achieving expertness and success. While all this is done within the more or less accepted bounds of use and wont, traditionally derived and socially imposed, it is the individual who does the work, who adjusts himself, who creates. Thus, whatever factors may be held responsible for the precipitation at certain times and places of individual detachment, self-assertion, and originality, it must not be forgotten that in one form or another these qualities have been asserting themselves all along, nor have they failed to leave their mark on the many types of civilization encompassed in the primitive world.

A word is due to the author's conception of an idea-system as characterizing a particular form of civilization, at a given time and place. The conception is not new, but appears here in a somewhat novel illumination. The following passages may serve to elucidate the author's point:

"If then, we come to compare, not man and brute, but the differing groups that go to make up the human population of the globe, the distinguishing feature of any group will be, not its language, implements, or institutions, but its particular idea-system, of which these other manifestations of activity are varying expressions. Without exception the products of human activity are expressions or aspects of the entire mental content of the group or individual. This mental content, moreover, is not to be conceived of as a mere assemblage of disparate units placed in juxtaposition, but as cohering in an idea-system. Ideas are not simply accumulated or heaped up; on the contrary, every 'new' idea added not only modifies, but is in turn modified by the existing system into which it is incorporated" (pp. 102-3).

And, again: "It will appear, then, that if we are to consider the content of life in addition to the exterior forms of human association,

the study before us must concern itself with the factors and processes through which the idea-systems of different groups have come to be as we find them today" (p. 103).

Now, all this is very suggestive, but also very unclear. A good many interpretations could be given of the author's formulation; consequently it will be best to defer more deliberate discussion until performance has clarified the author's intention. One or two points, however, should not be passed over in silence. We are told that "language, implements, or institutions" are expressions of an idea-system. Two questions are in order here: in what sense are they expressions? and, are they expressions of an idea-system? It is, of course, understood that language is an expression of thought, but also determines thought; that implements are outgrowths of tasks to be achieved, but also determine or modify such tasks; that institutions spring from certain tendencies, attitudes, and needs, but, once more, are moulders as well as moulded. In other words, the psychological or psycho-sociological requirements which may be posited as the primary factors presently receive concrete embodiment in act, tool, or code, which henceforth are operative in producing shifts in the original psychological factors and in creating new ones, whereupon the process starts anew. Thus the objective or behaviour elements of a civilization can never be regarded as direct expressions of the ideas or idea-systems that may have originally engendered them, but are, in fact, indefinitely removed from them. Neither the objective nor the psychological factors may, in this context, be regarded as either wholly passive or wholly active. Rather is there a continuous give and take. Only in one sense, moreover, may one speak of *one* idea-system as underlying a state of civilization — and this brings us to our second question — in the sense, namely, that every civilization displays to a greater or less extent the oft-recognized tendency of integrating and assimilating psychologically the heterogeneous and variously derived elements of which it is composed. I suspect, therefore, that in his comparative study of different forms and states of civilization the author will discover complexes of idea-systems, rather than single idea-systems, underlying particular civilizations.

One feels disappointed to discover that, in the final analysis, the subject of idea-systems is brought down to the wholly inadequate level of the environmentalist. We read: "Differences in idea-systems are, fundamentally, man's response to differences in his surroundings" (p. 113; and similar statements appear on pp. 117 and 118). Must

we hear once more that the "surroundings" of a group "determine" its primary interests, and that these, the primary economic interests, determine the system of ideas? What the "surroundings" do effect is, at most, to hold man to an adjustment once made (the adjustment itself always remaining one of a set of possible ones), while offering considerable resistance to further readjustments.<sup>1</sup> As to idea-systems, when we hear that the language of the Eskimo has many different words for "seal," whereas the Arab disposes of a similar elaboration of terms for the camel (p. 114), the cultural significance of this is by no means apparent. The idea-systems in the two cases might conceivably be quite similar, the seal with its terminology fitting into an Eskimo pigeon-hole, the camel into that of the Arab. Nor is it at all clear why fishing, cattle-raising, and farming should determine different idea-systems, except in a sense much more restricted than that implied in the author's formulation. There will, of course, be a difference, but how deep will it reach?

In the last chapter, on "Methods and Results," the author's argument is, perhaps, less striking, but his reasoning is in closer touch with concrete fact. The analysis here is often impressive. Turning to a general characterization of the nature and mechanism of civilization, the author asks with Bagehot: "If fixity is an invariable ingredient in early civilizations, how then did any civilization become unfixed?" (pp. 130-1). The task, then, is to disclose first the factors working for stagnation, then those enhancing change. For purposes of such an analysis the author takes man for granted, leaving the problem of his physical history to the biologist, and also postulates a general psychological comparability of mankind. That the latter postulate is but a working hypothesis the author is well aware; it is for him a methodological assumption set up for purposes of a particular investigation (p. 136). The pages devoted to an analysis of social inertia, conservatism, tradition, will stand careful perusal (pp. 138-40). They close with this pertinent and timely remark: "While, then, the educative discipline tends to preserve what has been acquired, it presents a very real obstacle to further advance" (p. 140). Fixity, however, is not all, for were culture nothing but a method of preserving the past, progress would be impossible. "Under actual conditions," writes Teggart, "this fixity of ideas is never complete, and in all human

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<sup>1</sup> See Wissler: "Aboriginal Maize Culture as a Typical Culture Complex," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXI (1916).



groups there may be observed in operation certain processes through which idea-systems are being slowly but continuously modified" (p. 141). In dealing with these changes the author displays what seems exaggerated caution and fearfulness—one perceives how deeply stirred his spirit must be by the unique significance of the history-moulding episodes at the termini of migrations! Scant justice is done, therefore, to the cultural contributions of "great men" and even to that of the "contact of peoples," although the author ascribes not a little significance to this latter factor. We read: "For more than one reason, indeed, no 'genius' can make any great departure from the idea-system of his people; the individual may influence the group, but such modifications as he may succeed in introducing will proceed along established lines, and so cannot be regarded as significant 'changes'" (p. 143). This careless and unjust statement scarcely requires serious refutation. Again, with reference to the changes induced by the spread of cultural features in the "contact of peoples," when unaccompanied by invasion *en masse* and conflict *in loco*, the author writes: "The reason [for the inability of these factors to further 'advance'] is not far to seek, for while the contact process may tend, theoretically, to bring all groups to the level of the highest, it cannot serve to place any one group far in advance of the rest" (p. 146).

While a book might, perhaps, be needed to disprove this assertion, it is worth pointing out that the principle of creative synthesis, so brilliantly formulated by Wundt, stands in direct opposition to Teggart's allegation. The setting free of reserve energies, the release through foreign contact or inner changes of powers clogged up by traditional rut, guarantee at all times the possible emergence of much from little in matters cultural. James's admirable remarks, quoted by the author with undisguised appreciation, bear directly on the issue at hand.

In conclusion I want to quote two statements which give a succinct summary of the author's position.

Writes Teggart: "What we find actually throughout the course of history are the unmistakable results of constant processes manifested in fixity or persistence, tempered by other processes which gradually effect a modification of this rigidity. In addition to these two sets of processes, however, there is abundant evidence of the fact that at different times and in different places certain events have led to significant changes in the groups affected, and that these changes stand in direct relation to the phenomenon of 'advance'" (p. 148).

And, again: "The hypothesis required may now be stated in the

form that human advancement follows upon the mental release, of the members of a group or of a single individual, from the authority of an established system of ideas. This release has, in the past, been occasioned through the breaking down of previous idea-systems by prolonged struggles between opposing groups which have been brought into conflict as a result of the involuntary movements of peoples. What follows is the building up of a new idea-system, which is not a simple cumulation of the knowledge previously accepted, but the product of critical activity stirred by the perception of conflicting elements in the opposed idea-systems" (pp. 151-2).

As one looks back, synthetically, at the author's effort, its timeliness and significance are strikingly revealed. The pressing into service of the different social sciences in the common enterprise of making clear the history of man is a task of which the execution has recently been advocated from quite different quarters;<sup>1</sup> the theoretical importance, for certain purposes, of breaking through the accepted lines of demarcation between the conventionally recognized social sciences has also been indicated. The author is to be commended for his advocacy of a more precise methodology in the solution of specific problems in historical research, to supplement — we hope, not to supplant! — the less rigorous procedure of the more subjective type of interpretative historical narrative.

In so far as the author's immediate endeavour will consist in the determination of historical constants, he will certainly enjoy the support and keenest interest of all students of man and his history. It may be doubted, however, whether any constants thus revealed will prove as categorical as those of the natural or exact sciences. To all appearance, the author is free from racial bias and accepts man's culture the world over as furnishing strictly comparable material for historical study. He attacks and rejects the more extreme forms of environmental and economic interpretation. The scope and perspective of historical study is deliberately pushed beyond the boundaries of Europe, to include, in particular, the great continental mass of Asia.<sup>2</sup> Again, the author's careful attention to the psychological factors

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wissler: "Historical and Psychological Interpretations in Culture," *Science*, Vol. XLIII (1916), and his *The American Indian*, "Introduction."

<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that a similar if not greater extension of the historical outlook was theoretically advocated by Lamprecht in his *Die Moderne Geschichtswissenschaft*, and that Breysig in his *Die Geschichte der Menschheit* undertook the task in the concrete. Unfortunately, however, the highly speculative and almost fantastic excursions of the latter author could only serve to bring the entire scheme into undeserved disrepute.

involved in historical reconstruction deserves especially warm support in these days of behaviourism and reckless statistics. The approach to intellectual progress from the standpoint of the growth, conflict, and transformation of idea-systems holds out many alluring vistas, of interest and concern not alone to the historian and sociologist, but to the psychologist (barring the behaviourist faction) and the philosopher. Recognition must also be granted to the author's tripartite classification of the factors involved in the maintenance and growth of civilization, the factor of persistence or fixity, the factor of gradual cumulative change, and, finally, the factor of violent transformation leading to definite "advance." As indicated before, however, the scope given to the phenomenon of "advance" cannot be accepted without reservation.

Similarly, the specific formulation of his problem as given by the author cannot be pronounced entirely satisfactory. That his attempt represents an application of the method of science to the study of man is true only in a limited sense. For what he wants to do is to lay bare certain constants and determinants in historical successions. Theoretically, such an enterprise belongs to the level of the historical branches of such natural sciences as astronomy, geology, and biology. But it must, on the other hand, be quite different, in problem and method, from the procedures proper to the non-historical branches of the natural sciences as well as to the exact sciences. The narrowing down of the investigation to the determinants of "political organization," while permissible in itself, seems to have impeded the author's recognition of the vast multiplicity of factors in historical causation. The connotation given to the term "political organization" is too narrow, an issue not merely terminological, for a wider view readily reveals the fact that some fundamental features of political organization are inherent in all society. This discovery, again, will change the perspective in which the investigator will see the processes responsible for the emergence of the more modern type of political organization. The author's "constants," in so far as they are revealed in this preliminary study, are open to criticism. The constant climate-migration, while rooted in fact, cannot qualify as a necessary or invariable causal succession. While it may be provisionally admitted that climatic changes of sufficient magnitude and destructiveness will probably always result in mass migrations, the latter are causally linked to a great variety of other factors. Again, the migration-political-organization constant, even though the author might succeed in demonstrating

it for a particular type of political organization, amounts at best but to one of many factors involved in the process. For migrations unaccompanied by political centralization are as common as political organization not rooted in migration.

Adverse climatic change, desiccation, migration *en masse*, conflicts at the terminal point of the route of travel, occupation of invaded territory, conflict of idea-systems, dissolution of established custom and belief, liberation of the individual, criticism, creativeness, advance — these constitute, Professor Teggart would have us believe, the “processes of history.” In their uniformity lies the “homogeneity” of history. I have tried to show how much truth there may be in certain aspects of this complex. The author's future demonstrations may serve to reinforce some additional elements of his theory. In its present form, at any rate, the theory must be rejected: it has failed to reveal the “processes of history” or to demonstrate its “homogeneity.”



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## VI

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### Culture and Environment



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### Culture and Environment

THE DEPENDENCE OF CULTURE ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT is a time-honoured problem. The degree and nature of their interrelations have been variously estimated by different writers and continue to occupy the minds of ethnologists, historians, and sociologists. Following the lead of Buckle, historians have often attempted to interpret culture in terms of physical environment,<sup>1</sup> and a similar tendency is noticeable among ethnologists, particularly since the time of Ratzel. In her *Influences of Geographic Environment*, an adapted translation of Ratzel's *Anthropogeographie*, Miss Ellen Churchill Semple has constructed an elaborate system of historical and cultural interpretations based on environmental influences.<sup>2</sup> Attempts to express national and racial traits in terms of physical environment continue to impress our minds and carry conviction. I propose in the following pages to discuss once more the general relations of culture and environment in the hope of clarifying some of the theoretical issues involved in these relations.

Before proceeding with our argument attention must be drawn to the types of causal interpretation applicable to historical problems. We may be interested, on the one hand, in following up all the antecedents of a given event or cultural feature. Strictly speaking, there is no limit to such an inquiry; what we obtain is, to speak with Spencer, a regressive multiplication of causes. On the other hand, we may be interested in studying the direct causes of a feature or event, disregarding further antecedents, and thus secure an insight into the character and range of the factors which appear as "causes" in culture and history. In specific instances the environmentalist might agree with the anti-environmentalist that certain changes in a culture may be due, not to its physical environment, but to cultural features in-

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<sup>1</sup> A striking example will be found in Myres's *Dawn of History*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also her *American History and its Geographical Conditions*.



roduced from another group; but the environmentalist refuses to stop at this stage. These imported features, he argues, were, in their turn, outgrowths of the physical environment of the group from which they are derived. Now, this retort, even though it were true in itself, would still be irrelevant to the issue, if what we are interested in is to ascertain what kind of factors appear as causes of cultural phenomena rather than to follow up each factor to its ultimate traceable antecedents. Another consideration to be kept in mind is that a factor may be regarded as a determinant of a feature or event only when these follow necessarily from that factor, and from it alone. If other factors are involved, each may only be regarded as a partial cause of the phenomenon, as a co-determinant.

Let us now examine the proposition, so often entertained, that the material culture of a group, particularly in primitive society, is determined by its physical environment. The snow house of the Eskimos is thus said to be determined by their arctic milieu, the wood industries of the North-West coast natives, by the cedar forests of that area. Now, while it will be admitted that snow is a *conditio sine qua non* of snow houses and that the elaborate wood-carvings of the North-West would probably never have developed in the absence of the cedar forests, neither cedar nor snow may be regarded as determinants. The refutation is right at hand: the Siberian Chukchi, whose environment is practically identical with that of the Eskimos, do not build snow houses; while the natives of California, whose forests excel even those of the North-West, have scarcely any wood industry, specializing in basketry instead. The presence of snow and forest may be a *necessary* condition of snow houses and wood-carvings, but it is not a *sufficient* one.

The historical factor, moreover, may not be neglected even in primitive society. Tribes often utilize materials not found in their own locality: thus the Todas of southern India use pots imported from the Tamil, while the Australian Dieri travel hundreds of miles to secure the pituri root cultivated by the natives of Queensland. And as we pass from primitive to more civilized conditions, the dependence of the material culture of a group on its physical environment becomes less and less conspicuous. Nor is this all. It may be stated as a general proposition that the materials utilized by a group for its dwellings, transportation, clothing, and food, are largely dependent on the flora and fauna of the region. But the determination thus disclosed is of limited cultural significance. Were one to classify the cultures of a number of tribes according to the materials utilized in their industries

and economy, the resulting grouping would not represent the cultures of the tribes, but the flora and fauna of the different regions; for there is more to a house or canoe or garment than the material it is made of, more to food than the animal or vegetable substance it contains. *How* things are made is more important, as culture, than *what* they are made of. The "how" of things is, as we know, a matter of pattern, of traditional form. The role of physical environment here is negligible. In the same environment, with the same materials, things can be made in all sorts of ways. In North America, for example, at least three basic methods are used in making baskets, and the distribution of the methods is but vaguely connected with physical environment. Pottery, in the primitive world, is either made by hand or turned on the wheel. Both methods have an enormous geographical distribution. In some areas both occur. Physical environment cannot account for the methods or their geographical distribution, both being traceable to definite historical factors.<sup>1</sup> In his study of Plains shirts Wissler distinguishes several forms. The material is always the same — buffalo hide or some other kind of skin which, to be sure, is readily available — but the forms differ, each having its fixed geographical distribution. Physical environment is not responsible for these facts.<sup>2</sup>

When we consider that culture is essentially dynamic, while environment is relatively static, our suspicions will be aroused against any attempt to represent physical environment as a determinant of culture.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding the conservatism inherent in culture in general, and in primitive culture in particular, the culture of the most primitive group changes as the generations go by, while the physical environment remains practically unchanged. In historical society the changes in physical environment are negligible when compared with

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., in this connexion, Laufer's "The Potter's Wheel" in his *Beginnings of Porcelain in China* (Field Museum of Natural History, *Anthropological Series*, Vol. XV, pp. 148-77).

<sup>2</sup> This should not be taken as a dogmatic or sweeping statement; contrary instances will occur. Thus Wissler in his study "Plains Costume" (*Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XVII, pp. 41-91) points out that the pattern of one kind of shirt is correlated with "the contour of the natural material," allowing that "it seems most probable that it was this form of the material that suggested the pattern" (p. 51). It is thus not impossible that in a particular instance even such a specifically human and cultural thing as a pattern may be directly traceable to a form in nature, in the physical environment.

<sup>3</sup> It need occasion no surprise that material culture alone is considered here, to the exclusion of other aspects of culture, such as religion, morality, social organization, etc. Obviously, material culture is that aspect of culture which is closest to nature, for is not material culture built of materials forming part of nature? If, then, it can be shown that even material culture is rooted in nature only to a limited extent, the argument need not be elaborated so as to include the other aspects of culture.

the tremendous transformations of culture. Miss Semple sees in this permanence of the environment an argument for the environmentalist: the environment alone, argues the geographer, is always there and it changes but little; hence it alone can exert a lasting effect, and the accumulated weight of its influence must be enormous. In reality, however, the situation resolves itself into a strong presumption in favour of the opposite camp. For if the same environment determines a continuous series of cultural states or transformations, then either the environment in its entirety is active all the time, in which case some extra-environmental cause must account for the difference of effect; or different sides of the environment come into action at different periods, in which case the selection must be determined by some extra-environmental cause.

The latter alternative does indeed correspond to reality. As culture progresses, new sides of the environment come into play, or old sides are being utilized to better advantage. Again, an environmental feature, as such, may be positive and useful, or negative and harmful. Thus, a river is a positive feature for communication along its course; it is such even with most primitive methods of navigation, but its utility vastly increases as sail-boat takes the place of canoe, and steamer that of sail-boat. On the other hand, a river is a negative feature from the point of view of communication between its shores; the hindrance is overcome by a heroic swim, then by a canoe, then by a light bridge, good for pedestrians only, and finally by a solid structure which serves to carry a street across the river.

This is only one instance of the continuous action of environment which is changed in its bearings by the intrusion of an extra-environmental factor, culture. A field continues to be an environmental feature when transformed by agriculture, but its cultural bearings are vastly modified, both in kind and in degree. Similarly the local flora and fauna, while always constituting part of the environment of a group, become thoroughly different in their significance with changes in methods of hunting and plant-gathering, food-preparation and industrial work. When, in due time, plants come to be cultivated and animals domesticated, the nature-culture relationship becomes transformed beyond recognition. As culture progresses, it makes different uses of the same environment, and different cultures make different uses of similar or identical environments. In all such cases environment alone cannot be held accountable for the discrepant results. Environment absorbs culture and becomes saturated with it; when the

transformed environment continues to be an active factor, it is no longer environment alone that operates, but environment plus the culture it has absorbed.

The culture-environment relation may be looked at from yet another standpoint. All culture may be conceived of as a resultant of invention and imitation, of progress and inertia. What, then, is the relation of inventor and imitator, in the widest sense, to culture and environment?

Now, it is not beyond the range of possibility that certain features of the environment — which we know not — may favour or hinder the appearance of inventors, innovators, reformers. However this may be, the specific contributions of these individuals depend altogether on culture. Richard Strauss, had he lived in Gluck's time, would have composed *Orpheus*; Beethoven, if a native of China, would have contributed to the music which jars so terribly on our ears; Raphael, if born a Hottentot, would have drawn steatopygous "madonnas"; a palæolithic Edison might have conceived the first fire-making apparatus. Similarly, in abstract thought, literature, decorative art, ethical theory, the specific contributions of the original minds of all times were determined by their cultural setting. The uniformity of inventions at given periods and within restricted culture areas illustrates the same proposition. With the progress of intercommunication and the consequent effacement of sharply characterized culture areas, the relative uniformity of inventions becomes an all but universal phenomenon.

We may now turn to the imitator, the standpatter. Again we may allow for the possibility that certain features in the environment — which we know not — may favour or check the development of those mental traits which stand for the reception and faithful reproduction of patterns or ideas. But psychic inertia, as such, is a general trait of human, nay, of all animal psychology and, in so far, is quite independent of any specific environment. What is to be assimilated is determined by culture; the mechanism of reception, assimilation, reproduction, is determined by human psychology; environment has nothing whatsoever to do with it.

Now, both of these factors are fundamental prerequisites of culture. Inertia, the basis of conservatism, conditions the solid framework of society and makes culture possible. Invention or initiative, on the other hand, engenders change, progress. In both of these respects culture is independent of environment.

All cultures, finally, are historical complexes. Every culture combines traits originated within its own borders with other traits which, coming from without, from other cultures, have become amalgamated with the recipient culture. Now, these foreign traits are obviously independent of the environment of the recipient culture. Thus every culture, as a historical complex, is largely independent of its physical environment.

These brief remarks will suffice to indicate that a large set of environmental influences, while actual, are not significant for culture; that in another set of cultural phenomena culture and environment co-operate and must be regarded as co-determinants; that in two of its fundamental aspects, invention and imitation, culture is independent of environment; and, finally, that every culture is largely independent of its environment in so far as it is a historical complex.

These considerations should not discourage us from studying the specific influences doubtless exerted by environment upon culture, but they might serve to emphasize the folly of any attempt to interpret culture or any phase of it in terms of physical environment alone. Speaking with reservations, culture must be regarded as a closed and to a large extent self-sustaining system.

*PART TWO*

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THEORIES OF PRIMITIVE  
MIND AND CULTURE



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I

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## Cultural Anthropology





## Cultural Anthropology

**T**he *Origins: Adolph Bastian (1826-1905) and Friedrich Ratzel 1844-1904*).—In writing history one cannot begin with *the* beginning; every beginning is a beginning. Ours will be the ideological work of the pioneer anthropologists, Adolph Bastian and Friedrich Ratzel.

They built on the imposing though inchoate foundation of the geographical, biological, and psychological sciences of their day, coupled with the vast but uncouth mass of travellers' tales, missionary accounts, and other odds and ends of ethnographic lore which constituted the anthropological wisdom of the time.

Bastian and Ratzel were scientists and specialists. Having profited from their versatile training in German universities, they had at their command a variety of methods, and with these qualifications they combined a first-hand acquaintance with the world and its inhabitants.

In other respects the two pioneers were very different. Bastian was a philosopher, Ratzel a natural scientist; Bastian's mind and temperament inclined towards religion and abstract ideology, those of Ratzel towards material culture and art. But in a wider sense they were both historians and were concerned with man in his geographical setting.

Of the two, Bastian was the greater traveller. He undertook nine world-wide journeys some of which kept him away from civilization for many years. He visited America, Africa, India, eastern Asia, and the islands of the South Seas. Then he revisited them, and each one of his colossal journeys resulted in a series of volumes which brought together facts, ideas, and theories about man and his culture.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bastian's journeys: (1) 1850-8, Peru, Mexico, China, India, Australia, Africa; books: *Ein Besuch in San Salvador* and *Der Mensch in der Geschichte* (3 vols.). (2) 1861-5, India, the Philippines, Japan, China, Mongolia, Siberia, the Caucasus; books: *Die Völker des Östlichen Asiens* (6 vols.). (3) 1873-4, Loango coast (Africa). During the decennium 1865-75 Bastian developed his folk-psychological ideas. (4) 1875-6, America; books: *Die Kulturländer des alten Amerikas* (3 vols.). (5) 1878-80, Persia, India, Polynesia, north-west coast of America. In 1886 was founded the Ethnological Museum of Berlin, truly a child of Bastian's. (6) 1889-91, Russia, Turkestan,

The more Bastian travelled, the deeper became his conviction of the fundamental unity of the human species. Pondering over this fact, he conceived the *Elementargedanken*,<sup>1</sup> the elemental ideas of mankind. Unfortunately, no list of these elemental ideas is to be found in any of Bastian's numerous volumes. This perennial searcher, although mentioning the elemental ideas often enough, barely defined them, and specified them not at all. For this he was censured perhaps unduly, as Bastian's meaning can, I think, be gathered from the context. What Bastian had in mind when he spoke of elemental ideas was nothing more or less than the original nature of man. Barring some carelessly radical spirits, we still believe in it; also, like Bastian, we are unable either to define it or accurately to specify its content, scope, or limits.

In other words, the elemental ideas were abstractions which received actual expression only under specific conditions. These conditions Bastian localized in what he called "geographical provinces," definitely circumscribed areas in which the elemental ideas were transformed into folk-ideas, *Völkergedanken*,<sup>2</sup> under the influence of geographical factors and the historical contacts with other tribes and geographical provinces.<sup>3</sup>

While Bastian vaguely believed in cultural levels and stages, he never fully endorsed the classical theory of social evolution. Eminently empirical in his entire mental outlook, he shrank from the very simplicity and formalism of this doctrine. Nor did the relation of diffusion to independent development in culture, a problem fated to play so important a part in later anthropological speculation, appear to Bastian's mind as either urgent or clearly defined. He claimed, in fact, that there was no such problem, that it sufficed to realize that similar ideas and cultural features arose independently in many places and among diverse tribes, and also that such ideas and features travelled

India, East Africa. (7) 1896-8, Java. (8) 1901-3, studies Buddhist philosophy in Ceylon. (9) 1903-5, Jamaica, where he dies.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. his book: *Ethnische Elementargedanken*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. his book: *Der Völkergedanke*. Bastian's folk-psychological orientation is apparent in many statements. He writes: "For ethnology man is not the individual *anthropos*, but the 'political being' which presupposes the social state" (*Der Völkergedanke*, p. 172). Again: "The idea of an isolated person is sterile; only social ideas are productive . . ." (*Völkerkunde*, p. 6). And, once more: "The thought of man, the individual, fulfils the possibilities of its existence only as part of social thought" (*ibid.*).

<sup>3</sup> Bastian's geographical provinces must thus be regarded as the dim ideological forerunners of what in a more critical and better-informed era became the "culture areas" of American ethnology.

from tribe to tribe and became incorporated in cultures other than those in which they had originated.<sup>1</sup>

Friedrich Ratzel's<sup>2</sup> early training was that of a geographer. Like his illustrious contemporary, Élisée Reclus, he was inspired by the teachings of Ritter. In the course of geographical work he early developed a taste for the study of life in its relation to environment. Thus were laid the beginnings for his environmentalism,<sup>3</sup> a theory to which he remained true throughout his life.

But it would be a mistake to consider Ratzel an environmentalist in the sense later acquired by this term. To him life, man, and culture were not entities to be juxtaposed to physical environment. Rather were they its culmination. The animal kingdom, including man, was but the last chapter in the development of the earth, and geography and climate culminated in culture. In one point only — namely, his theory of the state — did Ratzel come nearer to the modern doctrine of environmentalism.<sup>4</sup>

Having approached living phenomena from the standpoint of their material substratum, Ratzel never lost his bias in favour of the objective and concrete manifestations of culture as against its more elusive spiritual factors. Thus he was led to carry out a number of systematic researches on the distribution of concrete cultural features, such as plate armour and the African bow and arrow. The phenomena of diffusion were to him merely occasions for extensive concrete exploration. While he thus explored, he cared but little for the theoretical problems which sprang up on all sides, and as a consequence his methodological attitude was curiously nonchalant. He maintained that similarities in religion or philosophical ideas could develop independently among many tribes. With reference to material culture, on the other hand, he took a different stand. If we were to assume, argued Ratzel,

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<sup>1</sup> For a brief statement of Bastian's position, see Richard Schwartz: *Adolph Bastian's Lehre vom Elementar- und Volkergedanken*, inaugural dissertation (Leipzig, 1909).

<sup>2</sup> For a sympathetic study of Ratzel, see Karl Lamprecht's *Friedrich Ratzel*.

<sup>3</sup> F. Ratzel: *Anthropogeographie* (2 vols.). The English translation of this work, amplified and supplied with bibliographies, was made by Miss Ellen C. Semple, under the title: *The Influence of Geographic Environment: on the Basis of Ratzel's System of Anthropo-geography*.

<sup>4</sup> When Ratzel emphasized environmental factors, in the narrower sense, he usually took them with a grain of salt. He admitted, for example, that the quest of food was an important cause of migrations, but he added other factors, such as enemy invasions, love of conquest and plunder, and even "vague longings for more beautiful lands" (*Anthropogeographie*, p. 438), the fear of regular work, and the lure of laziness (*ibid.*, pp. 449-51). Nor were socio-psychological factors foreign to Ratzel's thought. Commenting, on another occasion, upon migrations, he wrote in substance: when people get going, they move for long periods; hence, entire eras of migration (*ibid.*, p. 444).

that every object had originated where it was found, investigation would come to a standstill; whereas the search for historical contacts proves a never ceasing stimulus to tireless exploration. However admirable on moral grounds, this stand cannot qualify as a methodological principle.

To the idea of social evolution Ratzel was almost as indifferent as his contemporary, Bastian.<sup>1</sup> His monumental *History of Mankind* is neither a history nor a study of evolution, but a careful descriptive account of many peoples at different stages of cultural development.

*Herbert Spencer (1820-1904), E. B. Tylor (1832-1917), and the Classical Evolutionists.*—While Bastian and Ratzel were thus engaged in exploring man and his environment, other thinkers in England and America were amassing facts and building theories which soon took the form of a doctrine more comprehensive in its sweep and ambitious in its finality than anything that had gone before. In logical consistency this doctrine was also far in advance of its predecessors and was thus calculated to hold the minds of men enthralled for at least two generations.

The year 1859, in which Bastian published his comprehensive *Der Mensch in der Geschichte*, also saw the birth of Darwin's *Origin of Species*.<sup>2</sup> Ratzel's *Völkerkunde* (1877-8) and Lewis H. Morgan's *Ancient Society* (1877) were published almost simultaneously. Most of the later work of Bastian and Ratzel, moreover, falls into the period during which Herbert Spencer developed his *Synthetic Philosophy*. Darwin's biological researches did not stand alone as the

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<sup>1</sup> To the extent to which Ratzel did think in evolutionary terms, his evolutionism was meliorated by historical insight, as may be gathered from the following passage: "We must be careful not to discern in all [cultural] differences remnants of greater differences or effects of differences in environmental conditions, for, while it is true that environment does in many ways influence the development of man, it must not be forgotten that he is a spirit in nature, and that nature is a spirit in him: culture can transform men mightily, and in its ever moving world-embracing developmental sweep, in which it makes one people after another the carrier of a certain phase of its unfolding, it institutes a great selective process. And so it comes that not merely are those human groups that today stand highest the pall-bearers of culture because of their high heredity, but also their heredity is so high because they are the pall-bearers of culture. This is to say that the distinctions between cultured and uncultured peoples rest in the main not on somatological but on historical and ethnographical criteria . . ." (*Anthropogeographie*, Vol. I, pp. 470-1).

<sup>2</sup> It might also be mentioned that in this very year Rudolf Virchow published his epochal work, *Cellular Pathology*, which became the corner-stone of modern medicine. During the years 1844-59, while Darwin was marshalling the facts that were to support the theory of natural selection, Wilhelm von Humboldt was publishing his *Kosmos*. Humboldt's work, especially his *Personal Narrative*, which Darwin read while he was a student at Cambridge, stirred Darwin greatly. Referring to this book and Sir J. Herschel's *Introduction to the Study of Natural Philosophy*, Darwin wrote: "No one or a dozen other books influenced me so much as these two."

scientific precursors of social evolution. While he was conducting his painstaking experiments, and before he began them, other men had applied similar ideas to other fields of inquiry. Charles Lyell in his *Principles of Geology* (1833) had used the concept of development in the interpretation of the earth's strata. Karl Ernst von Baer in his *History of the Development of Animals* (1828-37) had laid the foundation of comparative embryology and first suggested the parallelism between ontogenetic and phylogenetic processes. And Thomas R. Malthus, writing a generation earlier, published his *Essay on the Principle of Population* in 1798 (greatly modified edition in 1803). The reading of this essay in 1838 suggested to Darwin the concept of "struggle for existence."

Herbert Spencer, early influenced by the agnosticism and groping evolutionism of his father and uncles, was the first to attempt a more ambitious synthesis of evolutionary doctrine. The life-work of this thinker was dominated by two overpowering interests—evolution and political society or government. His essay *The Proper Sphere of Government* (1842) antedated the publication of any of his evolutionary papers, and the volumes of the *Ethics*, in which his political theory received a definite formulation, also constituted the final link of his evolutionary philosophy. Spencer's original intention of embracing in his philosophic system all cosmic phenomena, from the origins of the celestial bodies to society and ethics, was never fully carried out. The complete scheme as briefly presented in the *First Principles* was later modified by the elimination of the projected volumes on astronomy and geology.

While Spencer was able to apply his evolutionary conceptions to biology and psychology with relatively little reading and less experiment, he found himself facing a very different situation when confronted with the task of a similar synthesis in the social domain. It became evident that no comprehensive summary was possible here without a vast accumulation of data. As the carrying-out of this task single-handed was neither possible nor congenial, Spencer solved the difficulty by delegating the labour of gathering data to a number of assistants, who scanned the available literature on human society for illustrations of customs and beliefs. In this enormous task they were guided by the pigeon-holes prepared by Spencer on the basis of much preliminary thinking which was almost wholly deductive.

Thus was laid the beginning of what came to be known as the "comparative method," which consisted in the utilization of customs

and ideas gathered from many places and periods, to substantiate genetic schemes arrived at by speculation.<sup>1</sup>

While some passages in Spencer seem to imply a belief in the uniform progression of civilization as a whole, the thesis of his *Principles of Sociology* is of a less extreme character. Instead of applying the concept of evolution to culture as a whole, he splits it up into its several domains — political institutions, industrial institutions, ceremonial institutions, etc. — and then traces evolutionary stages in each of these. The chapter on professional institutions will probably always remain a model of evolutionary stage-building, for here Spencer traces each of the separate professions — the chieftain, physician, scientist, etc. — from their earliest precursors in primitive society through slight gradations to their modern representatives. In the notable chapters on industrial and military institutions Spencer draws a contrast between these two types of socio-political organization, representing industrial society as an outgrowth and successor of military society, with a set of social relations and attitudes of its own. This juxtaposition bears on Spencer's attitude towards government. From this the theory progresses to his conception of society as both an organism and a super-organism, and to the contrast he draws between the organism of society and a biological organism.<sup>2</sup>

In view of Spencer's reputation as the most comprehensive social evolutionist, it is worth noting that his picture of culture in evolution is, after all, incomplete. While working out detailed stages of development for religion, social and political organization, and the professions, he touched only indirectly upon material culture and art.<sup>3</sup>

The honour of figuring as the father of evolutionary anthropology Spencer justly shares with E. B. Tylor, a thinker of very different equipment and temperament. Whereas Spencer may be classed as a

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered, in this context, that the application of the comparative method to similar material had been attempted before, for example, by Auguste Comte and others; with the difference that these authors used the method to illustrate similarities or differences in customs, rather than to vindicate alleged historical sequences. (Cf. here Teggart's valuable book, *The Theory of History*.)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. I, Part 2.

<sup>3</sup> Although this omission was compensated for by other evolutionists, the gap in Spencer's system remains significant. The instance is not unique in evolutionary records: Wundt in his *Völkerpsychologie*, though dealing with art, also omits material culture. Anthro-po-geographers like Ratzel, on the other hand, and behaviouristic anthropologists like Graebner, in their studies of diffusion, prefer to operate with material things. It seems easier to apply evolutionary concepts when the outlines of the data are somewhat hazy, as in spiritual and social culture; easier to operate with the concepts of historical contact and borrowing when the outlines are objective and precise, as in material culture.

versatile amateur in all the sciences, Tylor was deeply versed in anthropological facts. Not only did he show a more critical spirit in the selection and presentation of material, but he also had achieved the perspective which accrues from first-hand familiarity with a number of different cultures other than our own. His own assertions to the contrary notwithstanding, Spencer's mental habit was essentially deductive, with a strong penchant for argumentative dialectics. Tylor, on the contrary, avoided abstract argumentation, preferring to rely on massed evidence to carry his points. By way of further contrast with Spencer, Tylor showed a distinct inclination towards balanced and moderate judgment, a trait in which he greatly resembled Charles Darwin, the arch-master of careful and judicious reasoning.

By and large, Tylor had less of an axe to grind, and his work was therefore intellectually more honest. When compared with Spencer's *Sociology*, Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871) was less a contribution to evolutionary thinking than an attempt to trace the life-history of a particular complex of beliefs — namely, animism. There is practically no stage-building in his book; instead it comprises illustrations of the forms taken by the belief in spirits at different times and in different cultures.

Tylor's most notable contribution to evolutionary methodology consisted in the concept of survival. Survivals in culture are left-overs from a preceding cultural stage, which often acquire novel psychological connotations or may even appear without any tangible meaning, as mere floating fragments in an otherwise coherent and well-knit cultural medium. Tylor taught that the description and analysis of such survivals can be used as a guide in the reconstruction of antecedent cultural stages, or even as a proof of their existence.

While Tylor in his principal work showed the common evolutionary disinclination to interpret cultural similarities through historical contact rather than independent development, he was fully aware of the difficulties of the problem. In his other two books, *Anthropology* and *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, he made substantial contributions to the theory and methodology of diffusion.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As an evolutionist, Tylor was, of course, inclined to stress the basic unity of the human mind, as in the following passage: "For if the similar thing has been produced in two places by independent invention, then, as has just been said, it is direct evidence of similarity of mind. And on the other hand, if it was carried from the one place to the other, or from a third to both,



In his article "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions, applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent" <sup>1</sup> Tylor laid the foundation for the application of statistical procedure to the phenomena of evolution. While it cannot be said that the conclusions he thus reached were wholly acceptable, this article did much to point the way towards a new orientation in anthropology.

The theory of social evolution ushered in by Spencer and Tylor carried the earmarks of a doctrine fated to become the crystallization point for subsequent thought and research. It was simple, final, and flattering to the vanity of white man, for in the evolutionary scheme his civilization appeared as the crowning achievement of man's earthly career. After a brief initial struggle against theological prepossessions and dogmatic scientific opinion, the new ideology became the dominating influence in social thinking. Writers like Frazer, <sup>2</sup> Lang, <sup>3</sup> and Hartland <sup>4</sup> applied it to religion and mythology. No systematic scheme of religious evolution was developed, but the works of these writers were pervaded by a general sense of the uniformity of religious progress among all peoples. <sup>5</sup>

The theorists of social organization went much further. Bachofen, <sup>6</sup>

by mere transmission from people to people, then the smallness of the change it has suffered in transplanting is still evidence of the like nature of the soil wherever it is found" (*Researches* . . ., p. 371). The sanity of Tylor's judgment in the formulation of principles will be gathered from the following passage: "It is not needful to accumulate great masses of such tales as these, in order to show that the myth-making faculty belongs to mankind in general, and manifests itself in the most distant regions, where its unity of principle develops itself in endless variety of form. There may indeed be a remote historical connexion at the root of some of the analogies in myths from far distant regions, which have just been mentioned; but when resemblances in Mythology are brought forward as proofs of such historical connexion, they must be closer and deeper than these. Mythological evidence, to be used for such a purpose, requires a systematic agreement in the putting together of a number of events or ideas, which agreement must be so close as to make it in a high degree improbable that two such combinations should have occurred separately, or at least the tales or ideas found alike in distant regions must be of so quaint and fantastic a character as to make it, on the very face of the matter, unlikely that they should have been invented twice. But it is both easier and safer to appeal to the effects of known intercourse between different peoples in spreading beliefs and popular tales, as evidence of the way in which historical connexion really does record itself in Mythology, than to lay down *à priori* rules as to what the effects of such connexion ought to be" (*ibid.*, p. 336).

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. XVIII (1889), pp. 245-69.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. Frazer: *The Golden Bough*.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Lang: *Custom and Myth: a Study in Early Usage and Belief*, and *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*.

<sup>4</sup> E. S. Hartland: *Primitive Paternity and Myth and Ritual*.

<sup>5</sup> Among other contributions to the theory of religious evolution may be mentioned: A. Réville: *Histoire des religions*; F. Schultze: *Der Fetischismus und Psychologie der Naturvölker*; A. F. Crawley: *The Mystic Rose*; L. Frobenius: *Die Weltanschauung der Naturvölker*; etc.

<sup>6</sup> J. J. Bachofen: *Das Mutterrecht*.

Swiss classicist, McLennan,<sup>1</sup> Scotch jurist, and Morgan,<sup>2</sup> American anthropologist, completely refashioned the then current views of the development of society, which had acquired prestige through the authoritative support of Henry S. Maine.<sup>3</sup> These writers taught that social organization began in a chaotic stage of promiscuity in which society was protoplasmic and unorganized and sexual intercourse unregulated; that this condition was followed by group marriage (according to Morgan, in two successive forms), during which period the clan system took its inception; that clans were later superseded by gentes, in which descent had shifted from the maternal to the paternal line; and that the series culminated, at the dawn of the historical period, in an organization based on the family and the village community, with a strong emphasis on the authority of the father. Post<sup>4</sup> amassed a vast collection of data on primitive law and began the ordering of it according to evolutionary stages, a task later continued with great perseverance and scholarship by Joseph Kohler, for many years editor of the *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, which became a treasure-house of materials on primitive social organization, relationship systems, and law.<sup>5</sup> The evolution of the idea of property was roughly sketched by Bücher,<sup>6</sup> while Haddon<sup>7</sup> and Balfour<sup>8</sup> were similarly engaged in building up stages in the development of art.

Among writers in Germany, where the theory of social evolution never gained the foothold it had attained in England and America, Wilhelm Wundt deserves particular mention. In his ten-volume work, *Völkerpsychologie*, he attempted an elaborate analysis of the development of language, art, religion, mythology, social organization, and law. While Wundt's work is not free from schematism, he had advanced in many ways beyond his English contemporaries. In

<sup>1</sup> J. F. McLennan: *Studies of Ancient History* (2 vols.).

<sup>2</sup> L. H. Morgan: *Ancient Society and Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*.

<sup>3</sup> H. S. Maine: *Lectures on the Early History of Institutions and Ancient Law*.

<sup>4</sup> A. Post: *Die Geschlechts-genossenschaft der Urzeit und Afrikanische Jurisprudenz*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. B. Tylor's "The Matriarchal Family System" (*Nineteenth Century*, Vol. XI, pp. 81-96). Other contributions to social evolution were: L. von Dargun's *Mutterrecht und Vaterrecht*; J. Kohler's *Zur Urgeschichte der Ehe*; M. Kovalevsky's *Primitive Law*, as well as his lectures delivered in Stockholm in 1890: *Tableau des origines et de l'évolution de la famille et de la propriété*; and C. Letourneau's *Evolution of Marriage and of the Family*, the latter being particularly notable for its uncritical use of materials and sweeping generalizations. Cf. also H. Cunow: "Les Bases économiques du matriarchat," *Devenir Social*, Vol. IV.

<sup>6</sup> C. Bucher: *Industrial Evolution*.

<sup>7</sup> A. C. Haddon: *The Evolution of Art*.

<sup>8</sup> H. Balfour: *The Evolution of Decorative Art and The Natural History of the Musical Bow*.

dealing with human motives he abandoned the rationalism of the associationist school in favour of will and the emotions. Rather than place sole emphasis on the individual who, in the evolutionary writings, seemed planted in a social void, Wundt stressed the importance and omnipresence of social determinants. No longer adhering to the unilinear scheme of development advocated by the evolutionists, Wundt never tired of emphasizing the great complexity of the evolutionary process.<sup>1</sup> He was, moreover, fully aware of the great historical importance of diffusion as a factor in cultural growth. In this respect, in fact, Wundt, in his last works, advanced beyond the limits prescribed by critical method.<sup>2</sup>

Of the special topics to which the evolutionists turned their attention, totemism deserves a word of mention. Apart from the voluminous but ideologically diffuse contributions of Frazer,<sup>3</sup> four books stand out as notable examples of the evolutionary approach: G. Laurence Gomme's *Folk-lore as an Historical Science* and F. B. Jevons's *Introduction to the History of Religions*, in both of which totemism is made the corner-stone of primitive religion and vicariously of most other things; Wundt's *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, one part of which is devoted to an analysis of a totemic "era"; and Émile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, in which totemism is identified with primitive religion on the basis of an analysis of the totemic organization of primitive Australia.<sup>4</sup>

The prevailing tendencies in the evolutionary phase of social thinking may be briefly characterized as follows:

Man everywhere and at all times is psychologically the same. This is psychic unity. Under the influence of physical environment, everywhere similar in its general features, the mind of man engenders similar cultures. Urged on by a quasi-organic law, these develop in ways that are essentially uniform. The changes thus undergone by culture are also gradual as well as progressive.

<sup>1</sup> For a brief sketch of Wundt's life and work see my "Wilhelm Wundt, 1832-1920," *Freeman*, 1921. Wundt's theoretical position is analysed and criticized by H. K. Haeberlin in "The Theoretical Foundations of Wundt's Folk-Psychology," *Psychological Review*, Vol. XXIII (1916). For a critique of Wundt's evolutionism, see below, pp. 189 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> In a section of his *Elements of Folk-Psychology* entitled "The Stages of Totemic Culture" (pp. 122-39) Wundt introduces what will be readily recognized as Graebner's hypothetical "cultures," without in the least realizing the nature of his commitment. As Graebner's position is diametrically opposed to Wundt's, this *quid pro quo* must be regarded as one of the curiosities of theoretical ethnology.

<sup>3</sup> J. G. Frazer: *Totemism and Exogamy* (4 vols.).

<sup>4</sup> For a critique of Durkheim's book, see below, pp. 361 sqq.

While the extreme evolutionary position represents culture as a whole as evolving in a uniform, gradual, and progressive way, the evolutionists usually restricted themselves to particular phases of culture, such as religion, social organization, or art, and then attempted to trace developmental stages in these domains.

Although the evolutionists, as such, did not deal with the problem of the relation of the individual to the group or with that of the emotional and volitional factors *versus* the rational ones, their arguments were usually framed in such a way as to place the individual in the centre of the stage, the group being practically overlooked. The primitive man of the evolutionists solves the tasks of mechanical and ideational adjustments to nature by means of a rational process, after the fashion of an intellectual problem.

Assuming, by and large, that cultural stages corresponded to stages of psychological development, the evolutionists taught that at any given time and place the content and scope of culture were what the psychological capacities of its human carriers permitted them to be.

As believers in fixed historical laws and unilinear development, the evolutionists regarded each phase of development with great seriousness. To them such a phase was not merely a historical event, but a link in a deterministic chain. This applied particularly to the first stage or "first origin." All evolutionists were eager searchers for the first origins of human customs and beliefs. In pursuing their work further, beyond the first beginnings, they loved to play with the analogy of phylogenetic and ontogenetic development, a notion which, like that of evolution itself, was part of their heritage from the science of biology. Particularly in the domain of art attempts were made to draw parallels between the artistic development of the child and that of the race.

Among the methodological tools employed by the evolutionists the principal ones were these: the so-called comparative method, which consisted in the accumulation of vast collections of customs and beliefs from different tribes and places and the utilization of these as illustrations (to the evolutionists, proofs) of cultural stages; and the method of survival, in accordance with which beliefs and customs assumed to be characteristic of antecedent cultural stages were discovered in vestigial forms in later cultures, these vestiges then being accepted as proof both of the pre-existence and of the specific character of such antecedent cultural stages.

In their better moments the evolutionists were, of course, aware

of the presence of cultural diffusion. But they made but scant use of this knowledge in the elaboration of their theories. When confronted with irrefutable evidence of the intrusion of foreign cultural traits, the evolutionists were wont to dispose of the difficulty by referring to the processes of diffusion as "intrusive features" or "distracting irregularities."

*The Downfall of Evolutionism.*—That the early evolutionists turned for their data to primitive society cannot be regarded as altogether accidental. Following one of the major tenets of their doctrine, they assumed that the primitive cultures still available for study were not unlike the now extinct cultures of our own ancestors, and the gradually accumulating evidence of European prehistory seemed to support this contention.<sup>1</sup> These primitive cultures, moreover, in America, Africa, Australia, and the South Seas, not only were highly diversified, but seemed also to differ in *degree* of development. It was tempting to assume, therefore, that they actually represented the *stages* through which our own ancestral culture had passed.

The historical period did not invite evolutionary analysis. There was here too much factual detail, the "disturbing" agencies of historical contact were too busily at work, marring the picture. Primitive cultures were simpler, more isolated; here, if anywhere, evolution could prove its case. The very paucity of data, especially the lack of historical depth in this primitive material, fitted it admirably to serve as grist for the evolutionist's mill. He who would have attempted to read evolution into the archives of recorded history was lost. The lateral expansion of his data, due to cultural intercommunication, as well as its chronological continuity and depth, were so great that the span of a lifetime would have barely sufficed for a breathless descriptive account. Primitive facts, on the other hand, were flat; they seemed isolated chronologically and apparently also geographically. With little effort they could be linked into a chain, and the chain do service as history, if only a suitable formula could be provided. The theory of evolution was such a formula. The chain of chronological zeros became transformed into a quasi-historical record of events by being placed on end in time, with the First Origin at the beginning and the Dawn of History at the end.

Primitive Australia had played the part of godmother to evolu-

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<sup>1</sup> As shown by Teggart in his *Theory of History*, this particular argument—a valid one, in the main—had already been used by Comte and his followers.

tionism; primitive America assumed a similar role towards anti-evolutionism. One of the first strongholds to be attacked was the comparative method. The facts harnessed by the classical anthropologists were many, but their quality was poor. In the lists of their authorities missionaries joined hands with explorers, stray travellers with professional anthropologists, prejudiced historians with resident government agents. What good was there in such raw material? What was worse, the facts were secured by a sort of literary kidnapping. They were torn forcibly from their historical homes to figure in evolutionary dissertations as cultural waifs, deprived of their local associations and chronological antecedents. When thus severed from the soil of historical reality, facts could be made to speak any tongue, to serve any dogma. What right, then, had the evolutionist to corral facts of such heterogeneous provenience and doubtful pedigree into quasi-chronological series and call them stages? If an Indian stage 2 was made to reach down to an Australian stage 1 and reach up to an African stage 3, this could obviously be done only if cultural development in the three tribes were posited as uniform. But was not uniformity of cultural change one of the evolutionary tenets the justice of which was first to be demonstrated by the comparative procedure? Thus, instead of providing proof of evolution, the evolutionist was merely chasing his own tail.<sup>1</sup>

Then attacks were levelled against the particular stages constructed by the evolutionist. It was shown that both evidence and probability were against the assumption of a single unilinear development in social organization, religion, art, material culture. In the domain of social organization, Westermarck argued for the universality of the family and its priority to the clan;<sup>2</sup> and American anthropologists, on the basis of local evidence and general theory, joined in his stand.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. F. Boas: "The Limitation of the Comparative Method in Anthropology," *Science*, N.S., Vol. IV (1896), pp. 901-8. A fuller statement of the criticism made above will be found in my *Early Civilization*, pp. 20-7.

<sup>2</sup> E. Westermarck: *The History of Human Marriage* (3 vols.). Consult also C. N. Starcke: *The Primitive Family in its Origin and Development*; and E. Grosse: *The Family*.

<sup>3</sup> John R. Swanton: "Social Organization of American Tribes," *American Anthropologist*, 1905, pp. 663-73; R. H. Lowie: "Social Organization," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XX (1914), pp. 68-97, and "Family and Sib," *American Anthropologist*, 1919, pp. 28-40; A. Goldenweiser: "Social Organization of the American Indians," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, Vol. XXVII (1914), pp. 411-36, and *Early Civilization*, pp. 235-82. Cf. also Lowie's "The Matrilineal Complex," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Vol. XVI, pp. 29-45; and W. H. R. Rivers's article "Marriage" in Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII.

In the light of these critical reconstructions E. S. Hartland's more recent contributions seem

The universality of the clan and gens stages was successfully disputed. Also, it was shown how slight was the evidence for the clan-gens succession, except, perhaps, in isolated instances. The hypotheses of promiscuity and group-marriage were rejected altogether, the first for lack of evidence and on general psychological grounds, the second as claiming primitiveness and universality for an institution which, in fact, was exceedingly rare and could, moreover, be better explained as an extension of individual marriage rather than as an antecedent thereof.<sup>1</sup>

In religion, animism stood its ground, but it was denied that the belief in spirits was either of the essence of religion or coextensive with it. Magic, for example, is as common as animism, yet magical beliefs and practices often involve no animistic element. The belief in *mana* or impersonal supernatural power, is akin to animism but not identical with it; yet it cannot be denied that the cycle of beliefs and rituals clustering about the *mana* concept come near the very essence of religion. Again, evidence was produced to show that the belief in a superior being was perhaps older than had once been supposed.<sup>2</sup>

The study of totemism which had become a favourite playground of evolutionary thinking, underwent a no less profound transformation. The manifold cultural traits which were once believed to constitute inherent and characteristic features of totemism were shown to be complex in their psychological make-up and historical derivation. They were neither at the root of totemism nor born of it, but were

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distinctly anachronistic. Cf. his *Primitive Paternity* (see my review in *American Anthropologist*, 1911), and "Matrilineal Kinship and the Question of its Priority," *Memoirs, American Anthropological Association*, Vol. IV, pp. 1-90; cf. Kroeber's review in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIX, pp. 578 sqq., Hartland's reply, and Kroeber's counter-reply, *ibid.*, Vol. XX, pp. 224-7.

<sup>1</sup> See W. Wundt: *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, pp. 34-53. Trenchant criticisms of the group-marriage theory will also be found in the older works of A. Lang: *Social Origins* and *The Secret of the Totem*; and N. W. Thomas: *Kinship Organization and Group Marriage in Australia*.

The whole problem is discussed from the point of view of relationship systems by Rivers in "The Origin of the Classificatory System of Relationships" (in *Anthropological Essays Presented to E. B. Tylor*) and *Kinship and Social Organisation* (cf. also his *Social Organisation*, pp. 37-103).

<sup>2</sup> See R. H. Codrington: *The Melanesians*; R. R. Marett: *The Threshold of Religion*; A. Fletcher: "The Import of the Totem," *Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1897; W. Jones: "The Algonkin Manitou," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, Vol. XVIII (1905); J. N. B. Hewitt: "Orenda or a Definition of Religion," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. IV, N.S. (1892); A. Lang: *Magic and Religion* and *The Making of Religion*; P. Radin: "Religion of the North American Indians," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, Vol. XXVII (1914), pp. 335-73; A. Goldenweiser: articles "Animism" and "Magic" in *New International Encyclopedia* (second edition), "Spirit, Mana, and the Religious Thrill," this volume, pp. 377 sqq; and *Early Civilization*, pp. 184-235; and R. H. Lowie: *Primitive Religion*, pp. 99-167.

Of special value is J. H. Leuba's *A Psychological Study of Religion*, as showing the great complexity of the magico-religious situation.

drawn into it from various sources. The notion of the universality of totemism was exploded, and the identification of it with animal- and plant-worship was shown to be countered by abundant evidence. Totemism emerged from this critical rehauling no longer as a religion, but as a peculiar combination of a certain type of religious attitude with a form of social organization. And if this was valid, then the imposing totemic theories of Gomme, Jevons, Durkheim, and Wundt fell to the ground.<sup>1</sup>

The development of art, on closer scrutiny, also revealed much greater complexity than had been assumed by the evolutionists. Evidence was not lacking to indicate that geometrical forms were historically as old as realistic ones, that each could and did develop from the other, that decorative symbolism was not necessarily a survival of defunct realistic designs, that many elements of plastic art, in fact, could not be accounted for by any factors involved in art as such, but were evidently connected with the nature of the material or technique.<sup>2</sup>

In material culture, again, pottery was dislodged from the place of a symptomatic invention, which it had occupied since the days of Morgan, for its very geographic distribution indicated that it could appear in lower as well as in higher stages of culture, that many otherwise high civilizations had no pottery, and that in other numerous instances pottery, although apparently indigenous and intimately correlated with a local culture, had been derived from other tribes through historical contact.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An admirable critical study of totemism by L. Marillier, "La Place du totémisme dans l'évolution religieuse," *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, Vol. XXXVI and XXXVII (1897-8), appeared too early and was disregarded and forgotten until its conclusions were vindicated by later research. See my essays on totemism in this volume, pp. 213-356; also my "Andrew Lang on Method in the Study of Totemism," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIV (1912), pp. 382-91, my articles "Totemism," *New International Encyclopedia* (second edition), and "The Method of Investigating Totemism," *Anthropos*, Vols. X-XI (1915-16), pp. 256-65, and *Early Civilization*, pp. 282-92. A general review of the history of totemic theories will be found in A. van Gennep's *L'État actuel du problème totémique*. Cf. also my "Totemism: An Essay on Religion and Society" (in *The Making of Man*, edited by V. F. Calverton, pp. 363-93).

<sup>2</sup> See W. H. Holmes: "Origin and Development of Form and Ornament in Ceramic Art," *4th Report, Bureau of American Ethnology* (1886), and "A Study of Textile Art in its Relation to the Development of Form and Ornament," *6th Report*, *ibid.* (1888); F. Boas: "The Decorative Designs of Alaskan Needlecases," *Proceedings U. S. National Museum*, Vol. XXXIV (1908), and "Representative Art of Primitive People," *Holmes Anniversary Volume* (1916), pp. 18-23; C. Wissler: "Decorative Art of the Sioux Indians," *Bulletin, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XVIII, Part 3 (1904); and my *Early Civilization*, pp. 165-84.

<sup>3</sup> The historical relations of hand-made pottery to the potter's wheel are discussed by B. Laufer in his brilliant essay referred to before: "The Potter's Wheel" (in "Beginnings of Porcelain in China," *Anthropological Series, Field Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XV, No. 2,



When this critical work was done, little remained of the uniformity of cultural development. Stages became so confused as to resemble a network rather than a ladder. The prehistory of culture once more appeared as a set of problems, many of them barely broached, rather than an orderly series of solutions available for use as a background for historical study.

While cultural change could no longer be assumed to be uniform, the assertion of the frequency of parallel development in cultures still remained, but this also was attacked at the hand of another concept — convergence. It was shown that the tendency towards divergence, assumed by the evolutionists as dominating the whole field of cultural change, was frequently accompanied by an opposite tendency towards convergence: cultural features, whether spiritual or material, located in two or more tribes, features which had once been distinct and dissimilar, often tended to assume more or less striking resemblances. This was particularly common when the cultures in question were themselves comparable, but it also occurred in cultures of markedly different types. Thus, two clan organizations originally dissimilar in their functions became similar or even identical by assuming similar functions. In material culture, tools and weapons originating in different conditions and in different cultures assumed similar forms in accordance with the principle of limited possibilities which precluded the appearance of many abstractly possible forms and often led to curious resemblances in the mechanical solutions.<sup>1</sup>

The principle of convergence, when once applied, proved to possess distinct superiority over the principle of parallelism, in so far as much shorter developmental series were necessary to demonstrate its operation, and in so far also as similarities could now be accounted for

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pp. 148-77). In his "Material Cultures of the North American Indians" (in *Anthropology of North America* by various authors, pp. 76-135) C. Wissler presents a synthetic sketch of material culture in North America the bearing of which on evolutionary theory is obvious. The primitive ideas of property are analysed by R. H. Lowie in Chapter ix ("Property") of his *Primitive Society*.

<sup>1</sup> See O. T. Mason: "Similarities in Culture," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. VIII (1896); W J McGee: "The Trend of Human Progress," *ibid.*, Vol. I (1889); P. Ehrenreich: "Zur Frage der Beurtheilung und Werthung ethnographischer Analogien," *Korrespondenzblatt der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*, 1903, pp. 176-80; R. H. Lowie: "On the Principle of Convergence in Ethnology," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, Vol. XXV (1912), pp. 24-42; F. Boas: review of Graebner's *Methode der Ethnologie*, in *Science*, Vol. XXXIV (1911), pp. 804-10; my "Principle of Limited Possibilities in the Development of Culture," this volume, pp. 359 sqq.; and W. D. Wallis, "Similarities in Culture," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIX (1917), pp. 41-54.

without assuming either identity of origin, or a long series of parallel stages, or cultural diffusion through contact.

The theory of diffusion itself, when further elaborated, became a powerful foe of the simplicist evolutionary scheme. As noted before, the evolutionists knew of diffusion, but generally disregarded it in their theories. Evidently this could be done only if the validity of the evolutionary scheme was taken for granted. As soon as the scheme itself became subject to critical scrutiny, cultural features derived through historical contact at once acquired full rights of citizenship in history. It was shown, moreover, that cultural diffusion, far from being rare and exceptional, was a constant and omnipresent process in modern as well as primitive cultures. When a cultural feature, thus borrowed from a neighbouring tribe, makes its appearance in a local culture and is accepted and assimilated, it thereby becomes part and parcel of that culture. Henceforth it must be included among the factors responsible for further changes. Each case of diffusion, therefore, complicates the cultural situation and makes it increasingly difficult to interpret changes in terms of inner forces alone. Thus the acceptance of diffusion at its face value is in itself sufficient to negate the evolutionary scheme in its original form.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The evolutionist did not cede his position without a valiant fight. To the criticism outlined above he had a rejoinder which at first seemed unanswerable. "You are right," claimed the evolutionist, "that cultural features are constantly derived from neighbouring tribes and that some of these are assimilated and become part and parcel of a tribal culture. But the conclusions which you draw from these facts do not seem to me inevitable. For what is it that determines the rapid acceptance and perfect assimilation of some foreign features, the less rapid acceptance and imperfect assimilation of others, and the total rejection of still others? The answer is, psychic or cultural preparedness. If a tribe is prepared to accept and assimilate a feature, it will do so, when the occasion arises. If unprepared, it will reject the feature. But what constitutes psychic or cultural preparedness? Is it not the very stage of development of which we have been speaking? If an adequate stage of cultural growth is reached, the ground is prepared for accepting certain foreign features, but also for developing similar or identical features through the inner forces of the culture itself. Hence cultural features, whether of inner growth or of foreign derivation, can become integral parts of a culture only if an appropriate stage in evolution has been reached. Therefore the acceptance of foreign cultural traits in no way affects our evolutionary scheme and we are fully justified in disregarding the phenomena of diffusion when we speak of evolution. *Q.E.D.*"

Having recovered from the initial shock induced by this retort, the anti-evolutionist then responded somewhat as follows: "Yes, without doubt there is much truth in your contention. There is such a thing as cultural preparedness, and it affects the acceptability or non-acceptability of features derived through diffusion. But you proceed on the assumption that preparedness and unpreparedness are absolute conditions, defining to a nicety the exact range and content of features that can or cannot be accepted or assimilated. This, I beg you to note, is very far from being the case. Preparedness merely indicates a limit, and so it is with unpreparedness. It is true that a tribe that knows not machines is not prepared to accept or utilize the printing-press and will not do so. It is also true that a tribe immersed in idolatry and spirit-worship will not be in a position to accept or incorporate in its culture the belief in a supreme, all-powerful,

With "uniformity" disposed of and the "stages" shattered, a different orientation towards origins and particularly towards "first origins" followed as a matter of course. The evolutionists took origins with tremendous seriousness. To them an origin was a seed which determined the growth of a culture or any part of it, and a first origin was the universal matrix in which the entire cultural process lay predetermined. The believer in historical determinism must needs stand in awe before first origins. To the anti-evolutionists an origin was but an incident, a mere cross-cut of the developmental process. Their origins, moreover, were unencumbered by the responsibilities of determinism. To the evolutionists, particular things could only develop from particular things; to their critics, almost anything could develop from almost anything. Therefore nothing was of special significance as an origin. Thus the search for first origins became a vain quest.

The evolutionary concept of gradual change received a set-back at the hands of another group of evolutionists, represented by Karl Marx (1818-83) and his followers. Marx did not deny the actuality of gradual change, but he insisted on the presence of another and opposite tendency, the tendency, namely, towards cataclysmic or revolutionary transformation. The frequency — nay, necessity — of cataclysmic change in the political, social, and economic domains soon became a commonplace of radical ideologies.<sup>1</sup> The temperamental opposition to these ideologies induced many thinkers to develop a general antagonism to the doctrine of cataclysm. Thus it came about

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all-knowing, and morally perfect deity. Again, the experiences with modern culture show with utmost clearness how the general cultural uniformity of the modern world facilitates and precipitates cultural exchange, because it stands for a widespread preparedness for the same sort of things, customs, and ideas. So far, then, you seem to be right. But this, my friend, is an illusion. For within the general scope of preparedness and unpreparedness lie infinite possibilities of the acceptance or non-acceptance of *particular* things and ideas. And it is these particular things and ideas that knock at the gate of a culture in intertribal contact. When a tribe is prepared for a certain invention, it may achieve it, but also may not. Now, if this invention happens to come to it from without, it will constitute a definite, perhaps an all-important contribution to its cultural growth; and if it did not thus come from without, it might never have been invented in the tribe, or not until much later in its evolution; and on this chronological difference might depend the historical fate of the tribe, its relations to other tribes, its ascendancy or submergence. The trouble with you evolutionists is that you are too absolutistic and formal in your reasoning, and that you pay so little heed to the flesh and blood reality of historical processes."

<sup>1</sup> See K. Marx: *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (tr. by Stone, 1904), and *Capital*, Vol. III; P. Struve: "Die Marxsche Theorie der sozialen Entwicklung," *Braun's Archiv*, Vol. XIV, pp. 677 sqq.; T. G. Masaryk: *Die Philosophischen und Soziologischen Grundlagen des Marxismus*; A. Labriola: *Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History* (tr. by Kerr); A. Loria: *Economic Foundations of Society*; N. Bukharin: *Theory of Historical Materialism*; R. Stammler: *Wirtschaft und Recht, nach der materialistischen Geschichtsauffassung*.

that its bearing on the other aspects of culture, such as art, religion, philosophy, science, was barely perceived and generally neglected.

As soon as this prejudice is overcome, it becomes obvious that relatively sudden change is at least as characteristic of the developmental process as is gradual transformation. Instances are at hand from all domains of culture in modern as well as primitive society. The spectacular cultural effects of the invention of the printing-press, the utilization of steam, the incandescent lamp, the telephone, wireless, radio, are matters of common knowledge. The revolutionary transformations achieved in thought by the publication of Lobachevsky's geometry, Mendeleyev's formulation of atomic weights, Darwin's principle of natural selection, or Einstein's relativity, are equally well if less widely known. A retrospect of the history of philosophy and art tells the same story. Similarly with reference to primitive society, we know of the transformations achieved in the life of the Plains Indians by the introduction of the horse, and of such dramatic episodes as the lightning-like spread of the ghost-dance religions among the American Indians.<sup>1</sup>

The third tenet of evolutionism, the progressive character of the evolutionary process, also suffered defeat at the hands of numerous critics. It was obvious enough that civilization as a whole had progressed; also, that at different times and places certain phases of it had progressed. But to assert this was one thing; to assume the universality or even necessity of progress, another. In comparing modern civilization with its antecedents, ancient and primitive, the tremendous advance in certain respects cannot be gainsaid. Thus, in accumulation

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<sup>1</sup> That such cataclysmic changes in culture are not only common but necessary can be readily perceived. The causal nexus here lies in an important aspect of culture itself. The inertia of the individual psyche is not sufficient to account for the phenomenon. But this inertia is ever reinforced by the inertia of institutionalism. Thus a powerful resistance to change is engendered which brings about what Professor Ogburn aptly described as an institutional lag. Now, under such conditions, to whatever domain of culture they may refer, new ideas produce but a slight ripple in the stream of culture, without affecting a definite change or advance. Some time must elapse, therefore, during which new ideas, working presumably in the same general direction, accumulate or gather momentum. Then when an open fight ensues between innovation and the *status quo*, the latter may be forcibly dislodged. This is cataclysm. The dislodgment of the *status quo* must be forcible, because it sticks so tightly.

(I should not want these reflections to be interpreted as meaning that cataclysmic transformations are not only common and necessary, but also desirable in all domains of culture. The reverse, indeed, may prove to be the fact. Thus, in the social, political, and economic domains, a wiser era may learn to achieve transformations revolutionary in content by evolutionary means. The economic interpreters of history of the Marxian pattern and communistic anarchists like Élisée Reclus or Kropotkin spoke of "evolution through revolution." The day may come when we shall learn to achieve revolution—that is, revolutionary change—through directed evolution.)

of knowledge our civilization far surpasses all of its predecessors. The same applies to the utilization of knowledge as a guide to thought in theoretical science, mathematics, and philosophy and its utilization in the practical problems of living and the control of environment, as in industry, agriculture, forestry, sanitation, and so on. In all this we stand supreme.

But as soon as the field of comparison is shifted to other levels, difficulties begin to appear. In religion, social organization, art, literature, ethics, our supremacy is not so apparent and can, in fact, be easily disputed. Our religion may be superior to that of the Wood Veddhas of Ceylon, but does it loom above the naturalistic pantheism of Greece or the lofty spirituality of Buddhism? In art we easily outrank the native Australians or the Indian tribes of the Amazon Basin, but would our artistic prowess fare equally well in comparison with that of China or even of Java, in its own field? In ethics we may, with some show of reason, claim superiority over the ancient Mexicans or the natives of Dahomey, but a comparison with the exalted code of Hinduism may prove less flattering to our vanity.

However this may be, argued the critics of evolutionary progressivism, a comparative estimate of progress implies standards, and these are dependent on judgments of value, necessarily subjective. Clearly, comparative estimates based on such judgments cannot claim objective validity. Apart from this, moreover, many day-by-day changes of culture can be easily seen to be neither progressive nor otherwise, while many other changes are unmistakably regressive.

Thus progress emerges from the critic's cauldron as neither universal nor characteristic of culture: it is but one of several kinds of cultural change.<sup>1</sup>

The assumption of the psychic unity of man on which the evolutionists had built their theory, was accepted by the critics, but not the offhand manner in which the evolutionists solved the problem of the relation of psychology to culture. As our familiarity with primitive

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<sup>1</sup> See C. Wissler: *Man and Culture*, pp. 361-4; A. L. Kroeber: *Anthropology*, pp. 502-6; A. Goldenweiser: *Early Civilization*, p. 26; F. H. Giddings: "The Costs of Progress," in his *Studies in the Theory of Human Society*, pp. 224-49; R. H. Lowie: *Primitive Society*, pp. 440-1; R. R. Marett: "Progress in Prehistoric Times," in his *Psychology and Folk-lore*, pp. 223-46; L. T. Hobhouse: *Development and Purpose*, pp. 284 sqq., and *Social Development*, pp. 337 sqq.; Bertrand Russell: "Economic Organization and Mental Freedom," in his *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization*, pp. 273-87.

How progress and the obstacles to it are envisaged by the modern scientific mind can be gleaned from the two tiny but delightful volumes by B. Russell: *Icarus, or The Future of Science*, and J. B. S. Haldane: *Daedalus, or Science and the Future*.

life increased, it became ever more evident that culture could not be explained by psychology, that the only road towards the comprehension of cultural individuality led through patient and intensive exploration of restricted local cultures in their historico-geographical settings. This was the historical as contrasted with the purely psychological approach. In America it was established on a firm theoretical basis by Franz Boas and was further elaborated by Wissler, Kroeber, Lowie, Ogburn, and others.<sup>1</sup>

For their excessively individualistic approach to cultural problems the evolutionists were taken to task by a number of writers. In Germany, Steinthal and Lazarus, editors of the *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* (started in 1860), had early directed attention to the importance of the social factor in the making of culture. They had gone so far, in fact, as to assume a social psyche or soul, after the analogy of the individual one. For this they were severely attacked by Wundt who purged social theory of all mysticism but insisted on the folk-psychological nature of language, art, mythology, religion.<sup>2</sup> The psychological study of the individual, taught Wundt, could never suffice to interpret these phenomena; social factors must be given due weight if culture is to be understood.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See F. Boas: "Some Traits of Primitive Culture," in his *Mind of Primitive Man*, pp. 197-224; R. H. Lowie: "The Position of Woman," in his *Primitive Society*, pp. 186-205, "History and Psychology," in his *Primitive Religion*, pp. 185-205, and "Culture and Psychology," in his *Culture and Ethnology*, pp. 5-26; A. L. Kroeber: "Parallels," in his *Anthropology*, pp. 216-41; C. Wissler: "Psychological and Historical Interpretations for Culture," *Science*, Vol. XLIII (1916), pp. 193-201, and "Culture as Human Behavior," in his *Man and Culture*, pp. 251-8; R. R. Marett: "The Transvaluation of Culture," in his *Psychology and Folk-Lore*, pp. 99-120; A. M. Hocart: "Ethnology and Psychology," *Folk-Lore*, Vol. LXXV (1915), pp. 115-38; W. F. Ogburn: *Social Change*; and A. Goldenweiser: "History, Psychology, and Culture," this volume, pp. 5 sqq., "The Nature of Civilization," in *Early Civilization*, pp. 15-20, "Early Life and Thought," *ibid.*, pp. 299-416, and "Psychology and Culture," this volume, pp. 59 sqq.

F. C. Bartlett's *Psychology and Primitive Culture* is notable as the first publication by an English scientist which is definitely committed to the historical standpoint.

<sup>2</sup> Steinthal and Lazarus: *Zeitschrift* . . . , Vol. I (1860), Introduction, also Steinthal: "Begriff der Völkerpsychologie," *ibid.*, Vol. XVII, pp. 333 sqq.; W. Wundt: *Völkerpsychologie*, Vol. I, Introduction, and "Ziele und Wege der Völkerpsychologie," *Philosophische Studien*, Vol. IV, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., among many pertinent passages, *Völkerpsychologie*, Vol. II, *Mythus und Religion*, Part I, pp. 527-31 ("Historischer und psychologischer Standpunkt der Betrachtung"); also, *ibid.*, Part III, pp. 5-10 ("Individuelle und allgemeine Einflüsse").

I might add to this that Wundt went further than most other folk-psychologists in his emphasis on the importance of social determinants. Not only was culture to be interpreted in folk-psychological terms, but individual psychology itself had often to seek its raw material among the data of folk-psychology. He writes: "Psychology itself is no less in need of the folk-psychological material accumulated by certain social sciences than these need the psychological foundations. If psychology will study the sources which are presented by the different domains of psychic life (in society), then its contributions to the understanding of the individual derived from the observations of this psychic life will no longer be neglected" (*Völkerpsychologie*, Vol. I,

Approaching the problem from a different angle, Émile Durkheim sided with the social interpreters. He taught that social facts were like "things," that they descended upon the individual like the objective facts of nature and worked through him, unconsciously, but irresistibly.<sup>1</sup>

The theoretical position of the Marxians pointed in the same general direction. To them the individual was nothing, society all. The individual may will, aspire, think, but he is but a fragile shell tossed about by the mighty current of social forces. Causally he counts not at all. Individuals pass, culture persists. Individuals dream, while culture, society, does the work of history. In all this there was, of course, much exaggeration, but as an antidote to the confident individualism of the classical anthropologists, Marxian social determinism performed a useful service.

Connected with the individualism of the evolutionists were their rationalism and intellectualism. In the works of Spencer and Tylor the savage often thinks out culture in response to his experiences with nature; Frazer's Australian medicine-men conceive and install a system of exogamy intended to prevent the intermarriage of near kin; inventions are made by primitive wise men through a mighty effort of constructive imagination.

One by one these illusions were dissipated. Here, once more, Wundt did much of the pioneering work. He emphasized will and the emotions as the prime movers of cultural life.<sup>2</sup> Applying his concept of apperception to mythology, he showed how mythological apperceptions resulted in the rich phantasmagoria of savage beliefs and stories.<sup>3</sup> With reference to inventions, he pointed out that most inventions were applied discoveries, and that the latter were usually accidental.<sup>4</sup>

Part I, p. 22). And, again: "Thus folk-psychology is an indispensable companion to individual psychology in the analysis of higher mental functions. . . . In many problems individual psychology must consult folk-psychological motives."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. his *La Méthode sociologique*, pp. 9, 10, 13, *Le Suicide*, pp. 353-4, and *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, which is throughout based on this assumption.

Durkheim, of course, went too far in the opposite direction, completely disindividualizing the individual. For criticisms of his position, see my "Religion and Society," etc., this volume, pp. 361-73, and *Early Civilization*, pp. 360-80.

<sup>2</sup> W. Wundt: *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie*, Vol. III (fifth edition), pp. 296-320 ("Theorie des Willens"), and pp. 744-56 ("Causalität und Teleologie Psychophysischer Lebensvorgänge").

<sup>3</sup> W. Wundt: *Völkerpsychologie*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 577-86 ("Allgemeine Psychologie der Mythenbildung").

<sup>4</sup> W. Wundt: *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, pp. 27 sqq. Cf. also my *Early Civilization*, pp. 158-61 and pp. 348-60, where an attempt is made to place the concepts "accident," "discovery," "invention," in their proper perspective.

The role of conscious and deliberate thought, as a culture-builder, was thus greatly reduced.

Another work of later date which exercised considerable influence in a similar direction was Lévy-Bruhl's *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (translated as *How Natives Think*). He made much of the pre-logical character of primitive mentality which was dominated by socially induced preconceptions. He advocated the principle of *participation* in accordance with which the minds of primitive men are so completely dominated by mystic rapports established between things, creatures, actions, and persons, as to exclude objective or logical thought.<sup>1</sup>

Boas stressed a similar point of view. He tried to show that the psychic sources of prevailing attitudes and ideas were unconscious or emotional, that this was true, for example, of the grammatical structure of language, of the formal basis of the plastic arts and of music. More than this, he made plain that much that passes for rational thought is but rationalization, an attempt to find "good reasons" for ideas and convictions already established.<sup>2</sup>

*Diffusionism and its Critics.* — Having achieved its first success in the field of evolutionary criticism, the study of diffusion soon gathered momentum, developing in range as well as depth. Following in the footsteps of Ratzel, students of culture history set themselves the task of tracing the geographical distribution of various cultural features, such as pottery, agriculture, clans, the mother-in-law taboo, the couvade, maize, secret societies. In all such instances the reality and significance of the diffusion of culture stood out as a conspicuous fact. Quite apart from the historical evidence of the borrowing of culture traits, the geographical distribution itself often gave less explicit but not less convincing proof than history itself. Take, for example, the instance of agriculture in America. Its distribution proceeds from Peru northward along the west coast of South America, then through Central America and Mexico to the south-west, south-

<sup>1</sup> L. Lévy-Bruhl's book referred to above and its sequel, *La Mentalité primitive*, while representing an attitude akin to Durkheim's, are less extreme. Lévy-Bruhl, moreover, is more particularly concerned with the relation of the individual psyche to culture, rather than to Durkheim's "society." But Lévy-Bruhl certainly errs in making too much of primitive irrationality and modern rationality, too little of primitive rationality and modern irrationality. For a critique of Lévy-Bruhl's first work, see my review in *American Anthropologist*, 1911, and *Early Civilization*, pp. 380-9.

<sup>2</sup> F. Boas: *Mind of Primitive Man*, pp. 214 sqq., and elsewhere. Similar ideas are expressed in J. H. Robinson's *Mind in the Making*.



east, and north-east of North America. This distribution is continuous. South and east of it in South America there is no agriculture, nor is there any north and west of it in North America. A distribution such as this can only be explained by diffusion; by diffusion, moreover, from a small number of centres, or, perhaps, from one original spot; for it would seem improbable in the highest degree that agriculture should have originated many times, and independently, in the area of its American distribution, while the tribes in the areas from which it is absent should not have developed it at all.

There are numerous other instances in which conclusions cannot be reached so readily. The story of the Magic Flight is an oft-quoted example.<sup>1</sup> While not universal, the story, with its fairly complex content, has a distribution that can be described as world-wide. Now, can it be assumed that it developed independently a number of times, or should one be tempted, in view of the complexity of the story, to ascribe its wide distribution to diffusion alone, consequent upon invention once, at some one place? The solution of such a problem is not simple, and this particular one has remained unsolved to this day.<sup>2</sup>

The sort of difficulties one encounters in this subject can be further illustrated by the case of Heinrich Schurtz who, after studying the decorative art of Melanesia and of the north-west coast of America, became convinced that historical contact must have taken place between the two regions. He was struck by the great resemblance of the totemic columns of New Ireland with the totem-poles of the North-West and was thus led to emphasize the prevalence in both districts of what he called the "eye motif." Subsequent studies of the American material revealed aspects of North-West art which made Schurtz's position, if not untenable, at least highly improbable. It was admitted that vertical columns were constructed in both districts; that these were ornamentally transformed by superimposed carvings of birds and animals; that in both places, moreover, the functions of these objects were religious or totemic. But the contrasts were as great as the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. F. Boas: "Mythology and Folk-tales of North American Indians" (in *Anthropology in North America*, by various authors, p. 315), where we read: "An example of such a tale is the Magic Flight, in which we find a combination of the following elements: flight from an ogre; objects thrown over the shoulder forming obstacles - first a stone, which becomes a mountain; then a comb, which becomes a thicket; lastly a bottle of oil, which becomes a body of water. It is hardly conceivable that such a group of unrelated incidents should arise independently in regions far apart."

<sup>2</sup> The problem of diffusion versus independent development, in relation to mythology, became the subject of numerous scientific controversies. Cf., for example, the case Grimm vs. Benfey or that of Andrew Lang vs. Joseph Jacobs.

similarities. The totem-poles of the North-West are huge structures, often looming high above the houses, while their Melanesian counterparts are relatively slight columns, barely reaching the height of a person and used on ceremonial occasions inside the club-houses. The nature of the technique is, moreover, quite different. Whereas the American carvings are in high or low relief and scarcely ever show any open work, the Melanesian ones are throughout of the latter variety: they are made in filigree, giving the effect of lace-work. The peculiar method of dissection and arrangement of designs characteristic of the North-West coast is never encountered in New Ireland or, for that matter, anywhere else. The American counterpart of the eye ornament, finally, was shown to be not an eye ornament at all but a conventionalized representation of a cross-cut joint. When this much is said, one is no longer inclined to glibly ascribe the arts of the two areas to historic diffusion.<sup>1</sup>

The study of diffusion, especially with reference to material culture, had features which made it attractive to many investigators. The problems were concrete, proof of the borrowing of a trait could often be furnished, and, as Ratzel had long ago pointed out, a continuous impetus was given to further investigation. Independent development, on the other hand, was a process that had to be assumed on general psychological grounds, for in most cases it was hard or impossible to prove it.

Thus it came about that some students began to think of the study of cultural diffusion as the main preoccupation of ethnology, and some of these began to support the view that most, if indeed not all, instances of cultural similarities should be explained by diffusion through historical contact. Perhaps the outstanding thinker of this group is F. Graebner, a German anthropologist associated with the ethnological museum in Cologne. In collaboration with W. Foy he formulated a theory of cultural interpretation, which deserves the name of "diffusionism."

Graebner<sup>2</sup> not only rejects the theory of evolution *in toto*, but holds

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Schurtz: *Das Augenornament*; and F. Boas: "The Decorative Art of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast," *Bulletin XI, American Museum of Natural History* (1897), pp. 123-76 (now reprinted with additions in *Primitive Art*).

<sup>2</sup> The views of Graebner and of the other writers of the "culture-historical school" can be gleaned from the following works: F. Graebner: "Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten in Ozeanien," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XXXVII (1905), pp. 28-54, "Die Melanische Bogenkultur und ihre Verwandten," *Anthropos*, Vol. IV (1909), pp. 726-80, 998-1032, *Die Methode der Ethnologie*, and various articles in *Ethnologica* and the *Baessler-Archiv*; F. Graebner and W. Foy: "Begriff, Aufgaben und Geschichte der Volkerkunde," *Führer durch das Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum der*

the creativeness of man in slight respect. Inventions (in the sense of original ideas) are rare, he thinks; similar inventions in different places, even rarer. Therefore the independent origin of cultural similarities can only be assumed after all attempts at reducing them to historical contact or common historical origin have failed.<sup>1</sup> The task of ethnology thus becomes the reconstruction of the historic contacts of peoples and of the wanderings of cultural features from tribe to tribe.

In view of the deficient chronology in the study of primitive records and the paucity and unreliability of historical data, the wanderings of cultures or cultural features must be inferred from the similarities observed in different areas. For this reason the problem of discovering and evaluating similarities becomes to Graebner of prime importance. He distinguishes two criteria of similarity, one qualitative, the other quantitative. The qualitative criterion refers to similarities in form, such as the shapes of pots or other material objects, the elements of design in art, or the descriptive contents of religious beliefs and rituals. The quantitative criterion refers to the number of qualitative points of similarity. This may apply to an object, or a set of culturally related objects, or an entire aspect of culture, such as religion or mythology or art, or to the culture as a whole, in comparison with corresponding items in another district. The more striking the qualitative resemblances and the larger their number, the less probable becomes independent origin and the more certain common origin or diffusion through historical contact.

These criteria, claims Graebner, have absolute logical validity, and if, in their light, the verdict is diffusion, then it will stand, whatever the geographical distance between the two districts in question. Distance, claims Graebner, is a relative matter. If diffusion can occur between two neighbouring tribes, it can also occur between *any two* tribes on the surface of the globe. The hesitancy, therefore, to accept

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*Stadt Köln* (1908); B. Ankermann: "Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten in Afrika," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XXXVII (1905), pp. 54-91; various authors in *Korrespondenzblatt der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*, Vol. XLII (1911); and W. Schmidt: "Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten in Südamerika," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XLV (1913), pp. 1014-24. (After protracted hesitation, during which Pater Schmidt often combated Graebner, this eminent linguist joined the fold, and with him William Koppers, the present editor of *Anthropos*.)

<sup>1</sup> Apart from the error in ethnological perspective implied in this formulation, it also errs in logic. This was noted by more than one critic. Haberlandt, for example, writes: "This involves a shifting in the burden of proof; in every science the *onus probandi* falls on the one who finds connexions or relationships, not the one who abstains from such inferences" ("*Zur Kritik der Kulturkreislehre*," *Korrespondenzblatt* . . ., p. 162).

diffusion when the distance is great merely reveals an irrational "fear of space and time" on the part of timid ethnologists.

Graebner, moreover, holds that cultural features like company in their travels. When historical contact is established between two tribes, some features open the procession, others follow. They do so inevitably. The assumption that some features might frame their own itinerary and travel in isolation is rejected by Graebner as a "culture-historical absurdity."<sup>1</sup>

Leaning upon these postulates, Graebner searches for evidence of diffusion everywhere and, finding it — always finding it — builds up hypothetical culture waves, culture strata, and culture districts on an enormous scale. Starting with Melanesia and Polynesia, he follows his "cultures" to Australia and Africa as well as South and North America.

On this side of the Atlantic Graebner's position was attacked by Boas,<sup>2</sup> Lowie,<sup>3</sup> and myself.<sup>4</sup> It was pointed out that his faith in our ability to evaluate cultural similarities was unjustified. In material culture objectively valid comparisons can be made, but even here the personal equation is ever in evidence, as attested by numerous controversies among experts over just such points of similarity between objects of material culture. As to art, religion, social organization, who is there confident enough to assert that his judgment of "impressive" similarity is likely to be supported by more than a few of his anthropological colleagues? Suppose, however, that the similarity in question is incontestable, and even that it is deemed impressive, does

<sup>1</sup> B. Ankermann takes the same attitude: "One must always remember," he writes, "that the elements which comprise a culture do not possess an independent life, but become animated only as organically interrelated parts of a whole. It is, of course, feasible to trace an isolated culture element in its distribution over the globe, but, in using these findings for any kind of conclusions, one must not neglect to observe in association with what other culture elements this one element usually occurs" (in "Die Lehre von den Kulturkreisen," *Korrespondenzblatt*. . . , p. 156).

It is strange that Graebner and Ankermann should have misunderstood the actual situation so profoundly. It is true that cultural features often travel together, sometimes for no apparent reason, as, for example, pottery and agriculture in America. But isolated elements also travel. Graebner and Ankermann are blind to the tendency of cultural elements to shake the dust of former cultural associations off their feet and travel in isolation. (Cf., in this connexion, my "Anthropology and Psychology," this volume, pp. 71 sqq.)

<sup>2</sup> F. Boas: review of Graebner's *Methode der Ethnologie*, in *Science*, Vol. XXXIV (1911), pp. 804-10.

<sup>3</sup> R. H. Lowie: "On the Principle of Convergence in Ethnology," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXIV (1912), pp. 24-42.

<sup>4</sup> "The Principle of Limited Possibilities in the Development of Culture," this volume, pp. 35 sqq.

this settle the question in favour of historical contact and against independent invention? By no means.

Graebner greatly underestimates man's capacity to originate new things or ideas. Does not evidence abound on all sides that in every local area new inventions are constantly made, new adjustments to environment come about, new forms of religion or social structure arise? This is indeed so apparent that no one is inclined to dispute it as long as the new cultural features do not reveal similarities with others belonging to some other tribe or area. *The independent origination of dissimilarities is not disputed.* If, therefore, it can be shown that factors are at work which are likely to result in less dissimilar or even in strikingly similar features in different cultural districts, the case is won for the independent occurrence of similarities. One such factor lies in the limitation of possibilities of development. There are, for example, mechanical limitations. Many different kinds of pots are known, but a pot is a pot — that is, a vessel or container. This function sets a limit to its formal variations. To a degree, one pot is and must be like another. Or take social organization. The different kinds of social units current in primitive society arise on the basis of man's relations to other men, to culture, or to environment. The number of such relations in their most general form is limited: they comprise blood, locality, sex, age, generation, rank, and common cultural functions. This is about all. The number of basic forms of social organization will therefore also be limited, and similar forms are bound to arise in different places.<sup>1</sup>

It appears, therefore, that our capacity to evaluate similarities is limited and that even undisputed similarities do not necessarily prejudge the case in favour of diffusion. This being so, geographical factors at once rise into prominence. All else being equal, the probability of diffusion decreases as distance increases. Unless, indeed, there is historical evidence of diffusion — but then there is no problem.<sup>2</sup>

Graebner's assertion that cultural features tend to form a unit, not

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. my *Early Civilization*, pp. 235-92, "Anthropological Theories of Political Origins" (in *Recent Political Theories*, edited by C. E. Merriman and H. E. Barnes, pp. 430-56), and "The Principle of Limited Possibilities . . ." in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> Graebner's insensitiveness to the geographical factor reveals an absence of that "ethnological tact" he himself is so fond of advocating. For distance is time, geography is history, and the disregard of these factors stamps the "culture-historical school" as theoretically unhistorical.

Ratzel, from whom Graebner learned so much, had a wholesome respect for distance as a factor in history. He wrote: "In connexion with the distribution of types of forms (*Formgedanken*) space and time are convertible terms" (*Anthropogeographie*, Vol. I, p. 608).

only in locally stabilized cultures but also in diffusion, is palpably opposed to all evidence. Nothing, in fact, is more conspicuous than the tendency of single cultural features or of small clusters of such features to become isolated from their local associations as soon as their tribal wanderings begin.

Graebner's hypothetical culture waves and districts can thus be shown to be not only speculative but fantastic. The pseudo-historical edifice of the "culture-historical school" is built on thin air.

The second prominent diffusionist was the late W. H. R. Rivers.<sup>1</sup> A moderate evolutionist at first, Rivers directed his energies towards the elaboration of a more objective and exact method of ethnological inquiry. This he achieved with signal success when he used the so-called genealogical method in the study of kinship systems, social organization, and ceremonialism. The shift in his theoretical position came during his studies of terms of relationship and social systems in the Melanesian Archipelago. Impressed by the obviously complex and composite character of these island cultures,<sup>2</sup> Rivers reflected upon the role of culture contact and mixture in social evolution. He still believed in evolution, but in a highly expurgated and revised version; also, he came to think of the historical process as much more complex than he had formerly conceived it to be; and, finally, he began to look upon the phenomena of intertribal contact as the dynamic element in culture which supplies the initial momentum for evolutionary change.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> W. H. R. Rivers's contributions to ethnology fall into two periods: the first embraces his methodological and descriptive studies, the second his contributions to kinship systems and terminologies and the theory of diffusion. First period: Articles on social organization and kinship in *Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, Vols. V and VI, *The Todas*, and "The Genealogical Method of Ethnological Enquiry," *Sociological Review*, Vol. III (1910). Second period: Presidential address before the Anthropological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, *Proceedings*, 1911 (also in *Science*, N.S., Vol. XXXIV, 1911), "The Loss of Useful Arts," *Westermarck Anniversary Volume* (1912), "The Sociological Significance of Myths," *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXIII (1912), pp. 307-32, "Survivals in Sociology," *Sociological Review*, Vol. VI (1913), pp. 293-305, "The Contact of Peoples," *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway* (1913), pp. 474-93, *Kinship and Social Organisation, The History of Melanesian Society* (2 vols.), *Medicine, Magic, and Religion*, "The Aims of Ethnology" (in his *Psychology and Politics*, 1923), and *Social Organisation*.

<sup>2</sup> By "complexity" Rivers means the mixture of heterogeneous cultures or cultural elements. He writes: "From this point it became my task to endeavour to analyse the complexity presented by Melanesian society into its component elements. As the argument proceeded I was forced into the conviction that Melanesian culture is even more complex than had at first appeared; it became evident that an understanding of this complexity must be a necessary preliminary to any complete knowledge of the development, not only of Melanesian culture as a whole, but of each of the individual customs and institutions which make it up" (*History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 2).

<sup>3</sup> "The general mode of treatment of this book," writes Rivers in his *History of Melanesian Society*, "holds a middle course between those of the evolutionary and historical schools because

Rivers's view of culture never descended to the mechanical level of Graebner. On the contrary, he was ever alert in observing the significance of the psychological interplay of cultural features; he studied the effect of routes of travel upon wandering culture traits, insisted on the complexity and variety of situations which arise when culture meets culture. In particular, he pointed out that in the course of historical contact of two or more cultures new features will make their appearance which were not formerly represented in any of the mingling cultures.<sup>1</sup>

His Melanesian experiences led Rivers to formulate two additional principles which were to prove of great significance in his later work: (1) cultural features, even highly useful ones, may be forgotten — "the disappearance of useful arts"; (2) even a small number of immigrants may usher in important changes, provided their culture impresses the native population as sufficiently "great and wonderful." In illustration, just one example: Rivers was struck by the multiplicity of forms of burial in Australia: inhumation in the extended and contracted positions, preservation on platforms and trees and in caverns, a simple kind of embalming, and cremation. He argued that in a cultural district otherwise so homogeneous such variety in one feature could not be explained except by the intrusion of foreign elements.<sup>2</sup> Thus he came to believe that Australia had been subjected to periodic invasions by peoples with higher cultures. After each migration there

the principle underlying it is that the contact of peoples and the blending of their cultures act as the chief stimuli setting in action the forces which lead to human progress" (Vol. II, pp. 5-6). Cf. with this my "History, Psychology, and Culture," in this volume, pp. 29 sqq.

<sup>1</sup> In contrasting his position with Graebner's, Rivers writes: "To him, the introduction of the dual organisation of society or of an Austronesian tongue seems to present no greater difficulty than the introduction of a new weapon or implement. To me, on the other hand, social organisation, language and religion seem to be bound up with the life of a people so far more intimately than material objects that it is not enough to say they have been introduced. It is the duty of one who attempts to analyse a culture to formulate a mechanism whereby an introduced element of culture has become part of the complex in which it is now found" (*History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. II, p. 4). Cf. also Rivers's general discussion of the conditions of migration in Melanesia ("Migrations," *ibid.*, pp. 292-309).

Rivers is certainly right in holding that Graebner's position reflects the psychology of a specialist in material culture. Graebner's unimaginative mind never transcended the limitations imposed by his experience with the mechanical details of an ethnographic museum. It will also be noted that several of Graebner's "principles" apply more readily to material than to spiritual culture. Similarities in objects are more readily discerned and described, they are also more permanent; the diffusion of things can be followed and proved more easily than that of attitudes and ideas. A mechanical view of culture, while never justifiable, is less artificial when applied to its material than to its spiritual elements.

<sup>2</sup> A fitting *reductio ad absurdum* of Rivers's position could be made on the basis of the modes of burial on San Cristoval (Solomon Islands), where not less than twenty-one methods of burial were recorded by Fox (as quoted by A. B. Lewis in his *Ethnology of Melanesia*, p. 184).

followed a deep cultural transformation, including the introduction of a new method of burial. In the course of time the other features were forgotten, but the new type of burial remained. In this way, after several migrations, the present condition came about. Incidentally, owing to the small number of immigrants involved in each migration, no perceptible trace of these happenings was left in the physical type of the Australians.

Operating with these principles, Rivers then tackled the formidable task of reconstructing the history of Melanesian society. The second volume of his work has no equal in the entire domain of theoretical ethnology in boldness, ingenuity, and the dialectic rigour of its speculations.

But the weakness of Rivers's method also stands glaringly revealed.<sup>1</sup> It is one thing to note the possibility of the loss of useful arts and the profound effects achieved by a few immigrant individuals, another to make use of these theses as principles of interpretation in the absence of local and historical evidence. Especially does this apply to the principle of loss of culture or degeneration, for *if the absence of a trait makes as good a case as its presence, then obviously anything can be proved*. In this instance the difference between theoretical possibility and methodological procedure appears in bold relief.

Another weakness lies in the disregard of comparative material as a check on the interpretation of local features. Thus Rivers explains the secrecy, multiplicity, and graded character of the religious societies of Mota Island as the result of culture mixture. But a glance at the religious associations of other areas, those of West Africa, for example, or of North America, will show that here also secrecy, gradation, and multiplicity are present, while conditions preclude the possibility of interpretation through culture mixture. Now, if these things can happen here without the stimulation of culture contact, then in Melanesia also Rivers's interpretation is hazardous, notwithstanding its theoretical plausibility and its historical possibility in this region, unless, indeed, specific proof can be adduced.

Another and final criticism of Rivers's procedure refers to the multiplication of hypotheses. Here the theory of probability sounds a warning. The probability that a hypothetical structure will tally with historical reality decreases at a tremendous rate with the complexity of the structure. On this score the probability of Rivers's brilliant

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<sup>1</sup> See my review in *Science*, Vol. XLIV (1916), pp. 824-8. Cf. also *Early Civilization*, pp. 313-6.



historical reconstruction becomes so low as to render the entire scheme all but impossible.<sup>1</sup>

*Franz Boas and the American School of Historical Ethnology.* — The earlier contributions of American anthropologists have been so completely overlaid by recent works that one does not usually think of evolution in connexion with America. This is both erroneous and unfair, for evolution had its day on this side of the Atlantic, counting among its representatives some of the towering figures of early American anthropology. In addition to Lewis H. Morgan's epochal contributions, the works of Major Powell in social organization, Cushing's in mythology and material culture, Mason's in industry, McGee's in primitive knowledge, and Brinton's in religion and mythology, are one and all oriented by the stars of the evolutionary heaven.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch of Rivers's contribution to the theory of diffusion is reproduced with minor changes and additions from my essay entitled "Diffusionism and the American School of Historical Ethnology," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1925.

It will be seen from this analysis that the contrast between his own position and that of Graebner, on which Rivers insists (this insistence, by the way, being shared by Graebner), is not as thoroughgoing as Rivers believes it to be: "This [Graebner's] attempt," writes Rivers, "...differs in its line of approach, in its general method, and in its main assumptions and principles so deeply from those of my own work, that it is difficult to say that there is any element common to us except our belief in the great complexity of Melanesian culture and the need for its analysis" (*History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. II, p. 3). But there is also this common trait: both writers use the theory of diffusion, not as a tool of inquiry, but as a speculative principle of interpretation.

This weakness in Rivers's methodological procedure accounts for his strange, even though delayed, receptiveness to the teachings of G. Elliot Smith and W. J. Perry. The theories of these authors, as falling outside the scope of ethnological science, will not be analysed in these pages, but they may be found in the following books and articles: G. Elliot Smith: *The Migrations of Early Culture* (Manchester University Press, 1915); "On the Significance of the Geographical Distribution of the Practice of Mummification," *Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society*, February 1915; "The Influence of Ancient Civilization in the East and in America," *Bulletin John Ryland's Library*, January-March 1916; *The Evolution of the Dragon; Elephants and Ethnologists; and Human History*. W. J. Perry: *The Megalithic Culture of Indonesia; The Children of the Sun; The Origin of Magic and Religion; and The Growth of Civilization*. Cf. my "Diffusion vs. Independent Origin; a Rejoinder to Professor G. Elliot Smith," *Science*, N.S., Vol. XLIV (1916), pp. 531-3; my review of Rivers's *Social Organization* (containing a section by W. J. Perry: "The Dual Organization"), in the *Nation*, December 1924, pp. 644-5; and my joint review of Rivers's *Medicine, Magic, and Religion* and W. J. Perry's *The Origin of Magic and Religion*, in the *Nation*, 1925.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. W. Powell: Introduction to *16th Report, Bureau of American Ethnology* (1894-5); articles in *American Anthropologist*, N.S., Vols. I, II, III; "On Actival Similarities," *3rd Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, Introduction, pp. 65-74; and "The Interpretation of Folk-Lore," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. VIII, pp. 97-105. F. H. Cushing: "Manual Concepts: A Study of the Influences of Hand-usage on Culture Growth," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. V, pp. 289-318; "The Arrow," *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 307-49. O. T. Mason: "Influence of Environment upon Human Industries or Arts," *Annual Report, Smithsonian Institution*, 1896, pp. 639-65; *Origins of Invention*; "Resemblances in Arts Widely Separated," *American Naturalist*, Vol. XX, pp. 246-51; "The Birth of Invention," *Annual Report, Smithsonian Institution*, 1892, pp. 603-11;

The historical trend in American ethnology must be identified with the life-work of one man — Franz Boas. By his early studies in the physical sciences and mathematics, his talent for concrete research, and his critical ability, this scientist was eminently fitted for the revolutionary role he was to play in the history of anthropology. When he appeared upon the scene, the foundations of the new science had already been laid. A great deal of primitive material had been accumulated, museums had been founded offering opportunities for research, young anthropologists trained in scientific method were ready to go forth into regions where primitive men were still available for study. They were prepared to bring back results that could withstand critical scrutiny. But there was no order or system in the camp of anthropology. Exact methods and subjective fantasy were applied almost at random. The temptation towards sweeping generalizations was seldom resisted. The demands made on anthropology to furnish background data for the other social sciences, worked steadily in the direction of premature conclusions and hasty finality.

Anthropology was young, and it was still possible for one man to encompass the wide range of its constituent disciplines. Boas became this man. He insisted on strict method and a critical approach. The statistical procedure developed by Francis Galton and others in the field of genetics was applied by Boas to the study of myths, where it proved possible, by using incidents and personages as units of variability, to determine the spread and direction of diffusion of myth complexes. Building upon the classificatory foundation laid by Powell, Boas established the science of American Indian linguistics, which brought fruit in two directions. By means of native texts phonetically recorded, anthropologists trained by Boas succeeded in building up grammars of numerous Indian tongues, thus making a signal contribution to the science of comparative philology, the importance of which, in this context, still awaits full recognition. At the same time, the linguistic approach became an indispensable tool of ethnological

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"Primitive Travel and Transportation," *Annual Report, U. S. National Museum*, 1894, pp. 237-593; and "Beginnings of the Carving Industry," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. II, pp. 21-46. W J McGee: "The Science of Humanity," *Proceedings, American Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1897; "The Relation of Institutions to Environment," *Annual Report, Smithsonian Institution*, 1895, pp. 701-11; "The Beginnings of Mathematics," *American Anthropologist*, N.S., Vol. I, pp. 646-741; "Primitive Numbers," *19th Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, pp. 821-51. D. G. Brinton: "The Aims of Anthropology," *Proceedings, American Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1895; *The Myths of the New World; Religions of Primitive Peoples*; "The Origin of Sacred Numbers," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. VII, pp. 168-73.

investigation. Some problems of diffusion could not be solved without linguistic analysis, nor could the more esoteric aspects of ceremonialism or the delicate subjective shadings of religious attitudes be fully understood in any other way.

Over and above all this, Boas's outstanding contribution was the historical point of view, in accordance with which native cultures were to be investigated in their restricted historic-geographical homes. The dominant perspectives here included the physical environment, the neighbouring cultures, and the many intricate psychological associations formed between the different aspects of culture.<sup>1</sup>

These principles, when applied to concrete investigations in the field and superadded to the extensive, if less craftsmanlike, researches of earlier students, soon brought fruit in the form of an imposing array of well-authenticated and partly co-ordinated data on Indian cultures.

The historical standpoint received concrete expression in the *culture area* concept.<sup>2</sup> This concept is both objective and psychological, objec-

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, perhaps, for the student, most of Boas's theoretical and methodological views are buried in concrete monographs. With a little care, however, all the basic points can be gleaned from the following selection: "Dissemination of Tales among the Natives of North America," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. IV (1891), pp. 13-20; *Indianische Sagen von der Nord Pazifischen Kuste Amerikas*, 1895; "The Growth of Indian Mythologies," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. IX (1896), pp. 1-11; "The Mythologies of the Indians," *International Quarterly*, Vol. XI, pp. 327-42, Vol. XII, pp. 157-73; "The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians," *Publications, Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, Vol. I, pp. 25-127; "The Folk-Lore of the Esquimo," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XVII (1904), pp. 1-13; "Comparative Study of Tsimshian Mythology," *31st Report, Bureau of American Ethnology* (1909-10); "Decorative Art of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast," *Bulletin IX, American Museum of Natural History*, pp. 123-76; chapter on "Art" and "Conclusion," in Teit's "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Publications, Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, Vol. I, pp. 376-90; "The Decorative Art of the North American Indians," *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. LXIII (1903), pp. 481-96; "Decorative Designs of Alaskan Needlecases," *Proceedings, U. S. National Museum*, Vol. XXXIV (1908), pp. 321-44; "Representative Art of Primitive People," *Holmes Anniversary Volume* (1916), pp. 18-23; "The Social Organization and Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Report, U. S. National Museum*, 1895; "Der Einfluss der sozialen Gliederung der Kwakiutl auf deren Kultur," *Internationaler Amerikanisten Kongress*, 1904, pp. 141-8; "The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island," *Publications, Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, Vol. V, Part I; "Ethnology of the Kwakiutl," *35th Report, Bureau of American Ethnology* (1913-14); "The Limitation of the Comparative Method of Anthropology," *Science*, N.S., Vol. IV (1896), pp. 901-8; "The History of Anthropology," *St. Louis Congress of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. V, pp. 468-82; *Anthropology* (Columbia University Press, 1907); *Handbook of American Indian Languages*, Vol. I, Introduction; also *The Mind of Primitive Man*; *Anthropology and Modern Life*; and *Primitive Art*.

<sup>2</sup> The history of this concept is of interest. While working over the ethnographic collections in the American Museum of Natural History, Professor Boas observed that the specimens readily fell into groups corresponding to geographical areas. Pursuing this idea further, he found that the continent of North America could be divided into a number of geographical districts characterized by more or less distinct material cultures. The culture-area concept was born. In a sense it was a rebirth of Bastian's "geographical provinces," but whereas the latter were reached intuitively and, like other of Bastian's ideas, remained vague and almost mystical,

tive in so far as the composite picture of one culture area differs concretely from that of any other, psychological in so far as the interrelations between the different aspects of culture in an area are also characteristic of it and differ from area to area. Thus, the relation of decorative art to social organization takes one form among the peoples of the North-West, another among those of the Eastern Plains; the relation of religion to material culture is oriented differently in the Eastern Woodlands and in the South-West, and so on.<sup>1</sup>

The cultural similarities and differences of the individual tribes in each culture area became the subject of minute investigations, which resulted in much new insight into the processes of cultural diffusion and assimilation.<sup>2</sup>

Correlated with the concept of culture areas is that of *marginal areas*. It was observed that the tribes lying near the boundary of two areas tended to combine traits of both: the Ute, for example, being intermediate between the South-West and the Plains, the Winnebago between the Eastern Plains and the Woodlands, the Lillooet and Shuswap between the Plateau and the North-West.

The concept of marginal areas served to give precision to the distinction between the objective and the psychological points of view. The culture area was an objective-psychological concept; the marginal area, a purely objective one. The area was marginal with reference to the concrete cultural contents of two areas, which in the intermedi-

the concept of culture area was dictated by the natural disposition of the data; it was concrete, realistic, and well fitted to become one of the working tools of American ethnology.

It must not be thought, however, that the culture-area concept itself is definitively objective. No concept of such generality based on a complex material can compare in objectivity with a descriptive account of the data. Certain elements of selection, emphasis, and valuation, necessarily subjective to a degree, must enter here. But this need not interfere with the usefulness of the concept, as long as the presence of the subjective component is clearly recognized.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Wissler: "The Influence of the Horse on the Development of Plains Culture," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XVI (1914), pp. 1-25, and "The North American Indians of the Plains," *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. LXXXIII (1913), pp. 436-44.

<sup>2</sup> Among many illuminating studies of diffusion, the following may be mentioned: C. Wissler: "Material Culture of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. V (1910), pp. 1-177, in which he shows, after an exhaustive comparative analysis, that the Blackfeet have originated nothing in the material culture which now is theirs, but must be regarded as carriers and propagators of cultural features originated by others; "Riding Gear of the North American Indians," *ibid.*, Vol. XVII (1905), pp. 1-38; "Costumes of the Plains Indians," *ibid.*, pp. 39-91; "Structural Basis of the Decorations of Costumes among the Plains Indians," *ibid.*, pp. 93-114. R. H. Lowie: "Plains Indian Age Society," *ibid.*, Vol. XI (1916), pp. 877-1031.

See also the two excellent studies of cultural assimilation by P. Radin: "A Sketch of the Peyote Cult of the Winnebago: A Study in Borrowing," *Journal of Religious Psychology*, Vol. VII (1914), pp. 1-22, and "The Influence of the Whites on Winnebago Culture," *Proceedings, State Historical Society of Wisconsin* for 1913, pp. 137-45.

ate marginal area were found more or less intermingled. Psychologically, a marginal area is but a type of culture area, for its cultural content is as much of a unit and has the same value to its human carriers as the content of a full-fledged culture area.<sup>1</sup>

The studies of intertribal diffusion gave occasion to elaborate the concept of tribal patterns. The pattern, which might also be described as the cast or spirit of a tribal culture or of a phase of it, provides a mould for new features, whether these arise in the tribe or derive from elsewhere. In the Plains such studies were carried out by Lowie for the age societies, by Spier for the sun dance, and by Mrs. Benedict for the spirit vision.<sup>2</sup>

Pushing further beyond the tribal pattern, Boas worked out family and individual differences, for example, for myths (among the Tsimshian), Lowie those for religion (among the Crow),<sup>3</sup> and Sapir those for ceremonial and other peculiarities, the so-called *topati* (among the Nootka).<sup>4</sup>

Other explorations into cultural depths were made possible by the application of the linguistic method. Thus, Paul Radin in his *Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*<sup>5</sup> succeeded in presenting the unadulterated religious experience of a semi-renegade Indian; Theresa Mayer described the actual functioning of relationship systems in the North-West; and Boas compiled from text material a most instructive

<sup>1</sup> To cite a modern example: no one would presumably consider the culture of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine less genuine because their *mores* partake of both German and French traits. Nationalistic ideology, of course, takes a different view of the matter, designating the representatives of marginal areas (whether geographical or psychological ones) as hyphenates.

<sup>2</sup> L. Spier: "The Sun Dance of the Plains Indians: Its Development and Diffusion," *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XIV (1921), pp. 451-527; Mrs. R. F. Benedict: "The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America," *Memoir 29, American Anthropological Association* (cf. my "The Origin of Totemism," this volume, pp. 335 sqq.); R. H. Lowie, "Some Problems in the Ethnology of the Crow and Village Indians," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLII (1912), pp. 60-71; C. Wissler: "The Ceremonial Bundles of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. VII (1911), pp. 65-289, particularly "Origins of Rituals," pp. 100-6.

In its more general aspects the application of the pattern concept is discussed by Lowie: "Ceremonialism in North America," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XVI (1914) ("Diffusion of Ceremonials" and "Ceremonial Patterns"); Goldenweiser: "The Social Organization of the Indians of North America," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXVII (1914), pp. 411-36, particularly "IV. Diffusion and Pattern," pp. 418-22; and Wissler: "Material Culture of the North American Indians," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XVI (1914), pp. 447-505, particularly "Trait Association" and "Diffusion of Material Traits."

<sup>3</sup> "The Religion of the Crow Indians," *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XXV, pp. 309-444.

<sup>4</sup> As yet unpublished.

<sup>5</sup> *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Vol. XVI, pp. 381-473. Cf. also Radin's *Crashing Thunder and Primitive Man as a Philosopher*.

account of the social system, at rest and at work, of the Tsimshian, a comparison of which with the systematized accounts of informants throws new light on the problem of a native social code, as taught and as lived.

Still other studies wrestled with the difficulties of disentangling the historical and psychological ingredients of cultural complexes. This was done by me for totemism,<sup>1</sup> a socio-religious complex; by Radin for the Midewiwin,<sup>2</sup> a socio-ceremonial complex; and by Mrs. Benedict for the spirit vision, a religio-mythological complex.

If the guiding principles of the historical school were to be condensed into a brief list, it would read somewhat as follows: the concentration of research upon restricted geographico-historical districts which are to be studied in their chronological depth and in their lateral geographical extension in intertribal contact; the application of the objective and statistical methods in the tracing of distributions of features or feature complexes, and of the psychological method in the study of the association, interpenetration, and assimilation of features; the use of the concepts "style" and "pattern" in the description of tribal or area cultures, especially in their relation to the absorption of new traits of local or foreign origin; the extension of the differential method inside of tribal boundaries to subtribal and individual differences; the adoption of the linguistic method wherever authenticity or delicate shades of meaning or evaluation are involved; the disentangling of the historical and psychological ingredients of cultural complexes; the rejection of evolution and environmentalism in their crude classical forms; and the application of the concepts "diffusion," "independent development," "parallelism," "convergence," not as dogmatic postulates, but as heuristic tools.<sup>3</sup>

*Recent Tendencies and Future Vistas.* — Methodological care seldom goes hand in hand with an intuitive grasp of hidden truths; the critical habit tends to discourage constructive creativeness. It was therefore inevitable that the methodological and critical safeguards used by American students should have resulted, at least temporarily, in a certain timidity in the face of broader and more speculative problems and

<sup>1</sup> "Totemism, an Analytical Study," this volume, pp. 213 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> "The Ritual and Significance of the Winnebago Medicine Dance," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXIV (1911), pp. 149-209.

<sup>3</sup> Additional data on the work of Boas and his disciples will be found in my "Diffusionism and the American School of Historical Ethnology," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXI, pp. 19-38.

in a reluctance to indulge in spontaneous creativeness and synthesis. The more daring spirits in Europe began to complain of the sterility of American ethnology.<sup>1</sup>

Signs are not lacking, however, of the recrudescence of spontaneity, theoretical creativeness, and speculative daring in America.

The various forms taken by these newer tendencies will be briefly indicated here.

Kroeber in his much discussed essay "The Superorganic" <sup>2</sup> inaugurated a trend towards cultural objectivism. He emphasized the super-organic, super-individual, super-psychological nature of cultural phenomena, stressed the theoretical autonomy of culture, the determinism and inevitability of historical events, and minimized — in fact, almost negated — the role of the individual in history. In a somewhat earlier essay <sup>3</sup> he had expressed his position in a series of rather cryptic but none the less thought-provoking propositions.<sup>4</sup>

Kroeber's theoretical broadside was met by Sapir, Haeberlin, and me,<sup>5</sup> who, while endorsing Kroeber's main contention as to cultural

<sup>1</sup> Professor Boas once voiced a similar sentiment with reference to American archaeology. A man who finds one potsherd, he declared, passes with us as an archaeologist, one who finds two potsherds, as a good archaeologist, one who finds three, as a great archaeologist.

<sup>2</sup> A. L. Kroeber: "The Superorganic," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIX (1917), pp. 163-213.

<sup>3</sup> "Fifteen Professions," *American Anthropologist*, N.S., Vol. XVII (1915), pp. 283-8.

<sup>4</sup> The eighteen professions are these: (1) the aim of history is to know the relations of social facts to the whole of civilization; (2) the material studied by history is not man, but his works; (3) civilization, though carried by men and existing through them, is an entity in itself, and of another order from life; (4) a certain mental constitution of man must be assumed by the historian, but may not be used by him as a resolution of social phenomena; (5) true instincts lie at the bottom and origin of social phenomena, but cannot be considered or dealt with by history; (6) the personal or individual has no historical value save as illustration; (7) geography, or physical environment, is material made use of by civilization, not a factor shaping or explaining civilization; (8) the absolute equality and identity of all human races and strains as carriers of civilization must be assumed by the historian; (9) heredity cannot be allowed to have acted any part in history; (10) heredity by acquirement is equally a biological and historical monstrosity; (11) selection and other factors of organic evolution cannot be admitted as affecting civilization; (12) the so-called savage is no transition between the animal and the scientifically educated man; (13) there are no social species or standard cultural types or stages; (14) there is no ethnic mind, but only civilization; (15) there are no laws in history similar to the laws of physico-chemical science; (16) history deals with conditions *sine qua non*, not with causes; (17) the causality of history is teleological; (18) in fine, the determinations and methods of biological, psychological, or natural science do not exist for history, just as the results and the manner of operation of history are disregarded by consistent biological practice.

This theoretical catechism cannot be analysed here (cf., however, my "History, Psychology, and Culture," this volume, pp. 5 sqq.), but a mere enumeration of the points suffices to indicate the orientation of Kroeber's thought: from evolution through criticism to objectivity and methodological rigour.

<sup>5</sup> E. Sapir: "Do We Need a 'Superorganic'?" *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XIX (1917): pp. 441-7; A. Goldenweiser: "The Autonomy of the Social," *ibid.*, pp. 447-9; H. K. Haeberlin, "Anti-Professions," *ibid.*, Vol. XVII (1915), pp. 756-9.

autonomy, took exception to his inadequate appreciation of the role of the individual in history, his over-confident assumption of historical determinism, as well as his theoretically inadmissible identification of psychology with biology.<sup>1</sup>

In reviewing the work of Rivers and that of the American anthropologists I took occasion to note a revival of interest in psychological problems which arose in the course of cultural studies. The American students, in particular, were keenly conscious of the necessity of a psychological technique to supplement the objective studies of the historian of culture. But to recognize this necessity was one thing, to supply the technique another. The attempts in this direction first of all produced a crop of theoretical discussions dealing with the general relations of psychology and sociology,<sup>2</sup> discussions which bring to mind

<sup>1</sup> Sapir writes: "... It is always the individual that really thinks and acts and dreams and revolts." And he adds: "Shrewdly enough, Dr. Kroeber chooses his examples from the realm of inventions and scientific theories. Here it is relatively easy to justify a sweeping social determinism in view of a certain general inevitability in the course of the acquirement of knowledge. This inevitability, however, does not altogether reside, as Dr. Kroeber seems to imply, in a social 'force' but, to a very large extent, in the fixity, conceptually speaking, of the objective world. This fixity forms the sharpest of predetermined grooves for the unfolding of man's knowledge. Had he occupied himself more with the religious, philosophic, æsthetic, and crudely volitional activities and tendencies of man, I believe that Dr. Kroeber's case for the non-cultural significance of the individual would have been a far more difficult one to make" (loc. cit., pp. 442-3).

And in his admirable "Anti-Professions," Haeberlin writes: "As soon as Dr. Kroeber will have become conscious of the dogmatism of his biological psychology, all other obstacles towards an understanding must fall like a house of cards. He will recognize the impossibility of building a cloister-wall about history, he will no longer look askance on the psychologically inclined anthropologist as a hybrid form of two distinct crafts, psychology will no longer be a bugaboo—in short there will be complete unison of the 'professions' and the 'anti-professions'" (loc. cit., p. 759).

I can only note here that this tendency towards an exaggerated cultural objectivism is by no means restricted to certain modern anthropologists. The movement, in fact, is more pronounced among sociologists. Its sources may be traced to Durkheim, with his social facts conceived as "things," and his well-known insistence on the externality and objectivity of social and cultural determinants. Among some of the younger professional sociologists this ideological tendency has taken the form of "institutionalism." Cf., for example, J. R. Kantor's "An Essay toward an Institutional Conception of Social Psychology," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXVII (1922). L. K. Frank has carried this approach over into other fields; see his "The Emancipation of Economics," *Political Science Quarterly* (March 1924); "An Institutional Analysis of the Law," *Columbia Law Review*, Vol. XXIV (May 1924); and "Social Problems," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXX (1925), pp. 462-74.

In a still wider perspective, "institutionalism" in social science will be found to be allied to behaviourism in psychology, and certain aspects of pragmatism in philosophy.

<sup>2</sup> See R. H. Lowie: "Psychology and Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXI (1915), pp. 217-29; W. H. R. Rivers: "Sociology and Psychology," *Sociological Review*, Vol. IX (1916), pp. 1-13; A. L. Kroeber: "The Possibility of a Social Psychology," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXIII (1918), pp. 633-51; A. M. Hocart: "Ethnology and Psychology," *Folk-Lore*, Vol. LXXXV (1915), pp. 115-38; R. R. Marett: "Psychology and Folk-Lore," in his book of that name, pp. 1-27; and my "Psychology and Culture," this volume, pp. 59 sqq.



the old controversy over the folk-soul between Wundt on the one hand and Steinthal and Lazarus on the other, as well as the prolonged disquisitions among sociologists over the content and nature of sociology.

To achieve results it was necessary to go further, and first steps in this direction can now be recorded. Lowie approached the problem from the standpoint of the contribution which psychology as a special discipline can make to ethnology.<sup>1</sup> He notes such cultural features as mystic numbers, local preferences for particular geometrical shapes in art, and the fits of performing Turkish shamans, during which phenomena of anæsthesia occur. These features and many others of like kind are illumined by the experience of the psychologist, who can show that the association of personal characteristics with numbers is a phenomenon not infrequently observed among Europeans, that geometrical figures may be seen as different from what they are on account of certain common visual illusions, that periods of partial or complete anæsthesia do actually occur in association with abnormal psychological states. So much, then, for the enlightenment which the science of individual psychology can bring to ethnology.<sup>2</sup> Further, however, psychology cannot go: "When . . . abnormal psychology has so far enlightened us, it has by no means exhausted even the purely subjective aspect of the case. . . . The cultural phenomenon, then, even on its psychological side, comprises a very appreciable *plus* over and above the facts that psychology can explain, and these additional data accordingly require treatment by another science."<sup>3</sup>

Wissler approaches the psychological problem from an entirely different angle. He attempts to establish a relation between the basic cultural content (*the culture pattern*) and the original nature of man. His argument is in brief as follows: all cultures, however different in

<sup>1</sup> "It is a very important cultural problem," writes Lowie, "whether the natives of South America knew the bronze technique, *i.e.*, whether they consciously produced the observed alloy of copper and tin. But how can the ethnologist solve this problem? Only by requisitioning the services of the chemist.

"Now very few would deny that services of the kind rendered by chemistry can also be rendered to the study of culture by psychology. Indeed, most people would at once admit that the relationship with psychology is *a priori* likely to be far more extensive and thorough-going" (*Culture and Ethnology*, p. 18).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 24. For numerous illustrations of a similar nature, see Lowie: *Primitive Religion*, pp. 185-205, 221-321.

<sup>3</sup> *Culture and Ethnology*, pp. 24-5. Lowie also says: "We cannot reduce cultural to psychological phenomena any more than we can reduce biology to mechanics or chemistry, because in either case the very facts we desire to have explained are ignored in the more generalized formulation" (*ibid.*, pp. 17-18). This brings up the theoretically more basic question of conceptual levels with which the various sciences can be identified. (Cf. my "Discussion of Professor Allport's Paper," this volume, pp. 60-1, note 2.)

detail, have elements in common; everywhere there are speech, material traits, art, mythology, knowledge, religion, family and social systems, property, government, and war (*sic!*).<sup>1</sup> As these aspects of culture are universal, they evidently cannot be explained by the incidents of environment or history, but must in some way be related to the very nature of man as a culture-making animal. Particular types of material culture, social system, art, are determined by history, but the capacity to make tools, organize socially, produce art, is imbedded in man's psychology and ultimately therefore in the germ plasm. "So whatever may be the real nature of the pattern for culture as a whole," concludes Wissler, "it is to be considered nothing less than a set of human germ plasm, and both the mechanisms and the drives that underlie the objective phenomena of culture, in their totality, constitute the native equipment of man."<sup>2</sup>

Still another aspect of the psychological approach was repeatedly broached in my *Early Civilization*. The question here was not in the application of the data of scientific psychology to cultural interpretation nor in a psychological evaluation of certain cultural ultimates, but in an analysis in psychological terms of certain general and characteristic but not universal cultural phenomena. By way of illustration one such situation may be mentioned here.

The contrast between the technical rationality and the philosophical irrationality of primitive man has long been a stumbling-block to the anthropologist bent upon interpretation. So much common sense and cold reasoning here, so much fantasy and logical irresponsibility there. Why? "He sees straight and hears straight," runs one passage, "with a sure hand he fashions his tools and applies them to the manufacture of articles of use and adornment, with much common sense and shrewdness and great physical adeptness he handles the plants, animals and humans of his environment. But *he does not think straight*; at least not when it comes to explanations and hypotheses. The world-view of early man is supernaturalism. How did it come, then, that such vast stores of cold fact, that so much common sense and perspicacity and shrewdness should have left practically untouched that all-important aspect of primitive thought which refers to the interpretation of phenomena?"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller statement of the "universal pattern" or "culture scheme," see his *Man and Culture*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Man and Culture*, p. 272. To grasp Wissler's meaning fully it is necessary to read the sections "The Universal Pattern" (pp. 73-98) and "Culture as Human Behavior" (pp. 251-80).

<sup>3</sup> *Early Civilization*, p. 156 (cf. now my *Robots or Gods*, Chapter ii).

A partial resolution of this paradox will be found in the following passage: "The psycho-physical processes involved [in these technical pursuits] are direct, pragmatic, teleological. There is in this domain some of the implied reason that is characteristic of animal adjustments, which also bear apparent evidence of intellectual acumen, the sort of adjustments so often noted in the industrial life of the bee, the ant, the spider and the beaver. The logic observed in early tools and weapons, traps and snares, pots, houses and boats, is the logic of nature itself, the logic of the objective relations of things, which through the medium of action moulds the mind so inevitably and smoothly as to be almost wholly unconscious. And if consciousness and ratiocination arise in the course of the industrial activity, they are presently submerged, the objective results alone being passed on to the following generation. As the aim in all of these pursuits is not to know but to do, not to understand but to achieve, the realm of the matter-of-fact becomes a happy hunting ground for the pragmatist, not an abode for the pursuer of the 'idle curiosity.' There is satisfaction when the thing works, and, barring accidents, no further changes are made. Henceforth, the mind accepts these condensed depositories of reason traditionally. They become part of the technical equipment of behavior, not of thought and understanding."<sup>1</sup>

But nowhere is the impending deepening of the psychological approach foreshadowed more significantly than in some contributions by Edward Sapir. This author distinguishes three meanings of the term "culture." Culture, in the first place, is the traditional baggage, material and spiritual, of a group. In this sense every tribe or nation has culture in so far as it represents what we have referred to as historical cumulation. Secondly, culture is a valuational concept, representing a definite level in a scale of evaluated cultures. What we know as cultural snobbery belongs to this category, for every culture conceives of itself as *the* culture and estimates other cultures accordingly. But the connotation of culture which Sapir takes as the thesis of his essay differs from both these meanings. Culture in this third and last sense

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<sup>1</sup> *Early Civilization*, pp. 406-7. That the situation referred to in the text is indeed psychological and by no means univocal, thus allowing of multiple interpretations, can be gathered from a perusal of Professor John Dewey's chapter on "Changing Conceptions of Philosophy" in his *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (pp. 1-27), in which similar data are presented, but the interpretation is different. (Cf., however, Dewey's *Experience and Nature*, pp. 210-15.)

The entire problem of the relation of technique to thought is of the greatest theoretical interest and, in view of present pragmatic and behaviouristic tendencies, of equal timeliness. See, in this connexion, the first three chapters of *Robots or Gods*.

" aims to embrace in a single term those general attitudes, view of life, and specific manifestations of civilization that give a particular people its distinctive place in the world "; and, again: " culture is civilization in so far as it embodies the national genius." <sup>1</sup> This is " genuine culture," which is " inherently harmonious, balanced, self-satisfactory," as contrasted with " spurious culture," in which the individual is so often afflicted with a sense of spiritual frustration." <sup>2</sup> Mere sophistication, usually referred to as progress, is not identical with a high civilization.

In this direction, continues Sapir, the sophisticated but shallow American of today compares unfavourably with the crude but genuinely cultured Indian. The ethnologist " cannot but admire the well-rounded life of the average participant in the civilization of a typical American Indian tribe; the firmness with which every part of that life — economic, social, religious and æsthetic — is bound together into a significant whole in respect to which he is far from a passive pawn; above all, the molding role, often-times definitely creative, that he plays in the mechanism of culture." <sup>3</sup> When aboriginal cultures come in contact with our civilization, there is a " fading away of genuine cultures," the native having " slipped out of the warm embrace of a culture into the cold air of a fragmentary existence." <sup>4</sup>

These ideas of Sapir's, which cannot here be pursued any further, open up vistas of psychological analysis on a much higher level of insight and refinement than has hitherto been customary in anthropological literature. Here as always surface exploration must precede boring.

I might note, in conclusion, a number of further tendencies, as yet too tentative for lengthy analysis. One is a revival of bolder and more speculative attempts in historical reconstruction; <sup>5</sup> another, a return to environmentalism, albeit in a greatly modified form; <sup>6</sup> a third, a

<sup>1</sup> E. Sapir: "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXIX (1925), pp. 401-30. The above citations will be found on p. 405.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 409-12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 414. Cf. also Sapir's "Culture in New Countries," *Dalhousie Review*, 1923, pp. 358-58.

<sup>4</sup> This is what Rivers had in mind when he wrote about the Melanesians that they were "dying from boredom." The rich content of their culture having been torn into bits, there is nothing to take its place. What we in our silly conceit thought of as first steps in civilization proved cultural starvation to the native.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. N. C. Nelson: "Human Culture," *Natural History*, Vol. XIX (1919), pp. 131-40; C. Wissler: "New World Origins," in his *The American Indian*, pp. 355-67; and A. L. Kroeber: *Anthropology*, pp. 326 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> See C. Wissler: "The Genesis of Culture," in his *Man and Culture*, pp. 212-50.

more constructive analysis of developmental trends in history pointing towards a revised evolutionism.<sup>1</sup>

The recent tendencies here enumerated mark an incipient liberation of American ethnology from its methodological bondage. Critical checks are useful in proportion to the richness of creative thought that needs to be checked. When criticism and method cease to be heuristic tools and become ends in themselves, creativeness withers.

The seeker of truths is like the builder of roads; both must combine imagination with method, vision with technique. The road, when built and made safe, is never quite like the vision, seldom at all like it. But unless there is a vision first, there will be no road at all.

For some time to come, American contributions to ethnology may fall below their accustomed standards of methodological caution and logical finality. But the loss will be a gain should this be accompanied by a proportionate rise in creative ideas and illuminating syntheses.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. my "History, Psychology, and Culture," this volume, pp. 5 sqq. A more comprehensive account and evaluation of the tendencies here briefly indicated will be included, in due time, in my *Theory of Social Evolution*.

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## II

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Sir James Frazer's Theories



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### Sir James Frazer's Theories

SIR JAMES FRAZIER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF PRIMITIVE mentality lies in two directions: he furnishes an interpretation of magic in its relation to religion and suggests an origin for certain social divisions and correlated functions.

The basic source of magical ideology, argues Frazer, lies in the mental process known as the association of ideas. When a doll fashioned in the similitude of an enemy, or merely intended to represent one, is maltreated and a similar fate is expected to befall the doll's original, the link is provided through association by similarity. If your enemy has in his possession some of your hair or nail shavings or a piece of wearing-apparel, he may deal with you at his pleasure and to your harm or destruction. In this case association by contiguity is responsible for the complex of the ensuing beliefs. It is notable hereby, continues the author, that the results achieved by magic are supposed to follow automatically and inevitably whenever the prescribed conditions are fulfilled. That spirits and other supernatural agents are often involved in magical procedure Frazer cannot deny. But he claims that "wherever sympathetic magic occurs in its pure unadulterated form, it assumes that in nature one event follows another necessarily and invariably, without the intervention of any spiritual or personal agency. Thus its fundamental conception is identical with that of modern science; underlying the whole system is a faith, implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature."<sup>1</sup>

If the magician fulfils the prescribed traditional routine, in the form of ritual, incantation, or what not, the desired result may be confidently expected. "Thus the analogy between the magical and the scientific conceptions of the world is close," continues the author. "In both of them the succession of events is perfectly regular and certain, being determined by immutable laws, the operation of which can be

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<sup>1</sup> *The Golden Bough*, Vol. I, "The Magic Art," p. 220.



foreseen and calculated precisely; the elements of caprice, of chance, and of accident are banished from the course of nature. Both of them open up a seemingly boundless vista of possibilities to him who knows the causes of things and can touch the secret springs that set in motion the vast and intricate mechanism of the world. Hence the strong attraction which magic and science alike have exercised on the human mind; hence the powerful stimulus that both have given to the pursuit of knowledge. They lure the weary enquirer, the footsore seeker, on through the wilderness of disappointment in the present by their endless promises of the future: they take him up to the top of an exceeding high mountain and shew him, beyond the dark clouds and rolling mists at his feet, a vision of the celestial city, far off, it may be, but radiant with unearthly splendour, bathed in the light of dreams.”<sup>1</sup>

In a discourse on magical potency literary spellbinding may be in place. We may be prompted to ask, however, in how far this picturesque presentation furthers an insight into the world view of magic. But let us continue the exposition of the author's ideas.

Magic is related to religion as well as to science. In this connexion Frazer defines religion as “a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.”<sup>2</sup> Thus religion is opposed to magic as well as to science in so far as it systematically makes use of conscious personal agents. Science is never concerned with these, deliberately excluding them from its interpretations; while magic, whenever it makes use of them, employs such supernatural personages as mere transfer points of magical influence, thus depriving them of all spontaneity and freedom of decision.

Having defined religion in the way just indicated, the author proceeds to point out that in primitive Australia where magic is rampant, religion is practically absent. The author admits, however, that throughout the major part of the globe and wide periods of history magic and religion are inextricably interwoven.

In point of temporal priority of origin, magic, in Frazer's view, precedes religion. “Yet though magic is thus found to fuse and amalgamate with religion in many ages and in many lands,” runs Frazer's argument, “there are some grounds for thinking that this fusion is

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<sup>1</sup> *The Golden Bough*, Vol. I, “The Magic Art,” p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

not primitive, and that there was a time when man trusted to magic alone for the satisfaction of such wants as transcended his immediate animal cravings. In the first place a consideration of the fundamental notions of magic and religion may incline us to surmise that magic is older than religion in the history of humanity. We have seen that on the one hand magic is nothing but a mistaken application of the very simplest and most elementary processes of the mind, namely, the association of ideas by virtue of resemblance or contiguity; and that on the other hand religion assumes the operation of conscious or personal agents, superior to man, behind the visible screen of nature. Obviously, the conception of personal agents is more complex than a simple recognition of the similarity or contiguity of ideas; and a theory which assumes that the course of nature is determined by conscious agents is more abstruse and recondite, and requires for its apprehension a far higher degree of intelligence and reflection, than the view that things succeed each other simply by reason of their contiguity or resemblance. The very beasts associate the ideas of things that are like each other or that have been found together in their experience; and they could hardly survive for a day if they ceased to do so. But who attributes to the animals a belief that the phenomena of nature are worked by a multitude of invisible animals or by one enormous and prodigiously strong animal behind the scenes? It is probably no injustice to the brutes to assume that the honour of devising a theory of this latter sort must be reserved for human reason. Thus, if magic be deduced immediately from elementary processes of reasoning, and be, in fact, an error into which the mind falls almost spontaneously, while religion rests on conceptions which the merely animal intelligence can hardly be supposed to have yet attained to, it becomes probable that magic arose before religion in the evolution of our race, and that man essayed to bend nature to his wishes by the sheer force of spells and enchantments before he strove to coax and mollify a coy, capricious, or irascible deity by the soft insinuation of prayer and sacrifice.”<sup>1</sup>

We may now turn to Frazer's parallel between science and magic. A pregnant hypothesis indeed, if true, for the antecedents of science would thus be pushed back beyond the historical period and into the very earliest unconscious cravings of the human spirit. There is a certain superficial feasibility in the point, to the extent that the work-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 233-4

ings of the magic act are supposed to be automatic, mechanical, as it were, and uniform, if the act remains the same. Here, however, the parallel, if such it be, ends. The magician's expectation that a similar act will evoke identical results whenever repeated does not involve the idea of uniformity in *nature*, although the situation lends itself to such an interpretation; the alleged uniformities apply to *magical acts*. Now, nature in its manifoldness is patently not identical with these. Does, then, uniformity in magical acts and their results imply uniformity in nature? The magical complex becomes clarified if emphasis is placed, not on the uniformities, but on the exercise of *power*. It is the possession of power by the magician, or, to express it differently, his control of the powers inherent in certain substances or acts, that brings success. As a rule, moreover, the entire magical performance is lodged in the supernatural level, something is achieved which, at least at the time and place, cannot be achieved by the ordinary matter-of-fact procedures of industry or technique. In numerous instances, it is true, magical acts are indistinguishable from ordinary matter-of-fact procedure. Here the emotion characteristic of the mystical attitude has "evaporated." Still, a test could be applied here. Suppose the magic — a medicinal rite, say — does not work. The native would refer the failure to a hostile magic — he would not doubt the potency of the original act: magic, as usual, proves proof against experience. To this it might be replied that faith in the curative power of a modern medicine is often sustained in the face of failure. True enough; but to the extent to which this is true, the medicine is on its way to becoming a magical substance. On the other hand, should the native, prompted by the failure of his magical cure, set about to change the nature of his technique, then, indeed, his magic would be magic no longer, but the inception of a sober curative procedure.

There is thus a fundamental contrast between the magical method and the method of science. Scientific procedure is ever alive to the lessons of experience. In a scientifically controlled invention or experiment the results, if unsatisfactory, at once react upon the procedure by means of which the results were attained. In the controlled trial-and-error situation which represents one aspect of scientific experimentation, experience speaks through the errors, leading to constant changes in trials, until the failures turn into successes. The same is true of the matter-of-fact procedures of industry, even the most primitive industry. Here, in the true birthplace of science, experience reacts constructively upon future efforts, leading to adjustment, im-

provement, invention. All this changes in magic. The magical universe and its representative, the magical act, are, to an almost incredible extent, proof against experience. If the act fails, no change of technique results, for the failure receives a magical interpretation: some other agency, a more powerful magician perhaps, prevented the success of the magical act. If the health or life of an enemy was the object sought, his own superior magical potency provides sufficient explanation of the failure of the hostile attempt. Thus there can be no change, no improvement, no readjustment, in the magical universe. The *perpetuum mobile* of supernaturalism is proof against experience.<sup>1</sup>

This view of the magical act places it in its proper relation to the wider field of magical phenomena as well as to the still wider range of supernaturalism in general, for the magic act is only a part of magic. There is no breach of continuity between the performance of the magician and the phenomena of magical transformations and influences which pervade the ideology of the savage as it stands revealed, for example, in the mythologies of primitive tribes: the transformations of men into animals and of animals into men; travelling to the sky by means of a rope of arrows, point to butt; the magic properties of amulets, charms, and talismans; or the various magical powers bestowed by guardian spirits, such as cures of various diseases, the power to recover from wounds or even to resuscitate the dead; the strictly limited but extraordinary powers of the west African fetishes; and so on through the endless range of similar phenomena. Throughout is present the idea of power, which, moreover, transcends the average limits of the workaday world. It is this notion of power that unites the act of the magician with the totality of the magical universe.

In their acceptance of supernaturalism magic and religion stand united. Both belong to a realm which transcends the matter-of-fact. It is for this reason that the typical magical and the typical religious situations are represented on their emotional side by what may be designated as the *religious thrill*, the subjective counterpart of supernaturalism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Robots or Gods*, especially Chapter ii: "Experience Heeded and Shirked."

<sup>2</sup> It is true that both magic and religion, in line with other cultural phenomena, are subject to the influence of routine and convention, and that magical as well as religious rituals, with the lapse of generations, often shrivel to mere ritualistic techniques; the original emotional content vanishes. This is the realm of Marett's "evaporated emotions." In a study of magic or religion as institutions, this aspect cannot be sufficiently emphasized. But if the two phenomena are envisaged as live psychological experiences, which in essence they are, the supernatural mystic

Both magic and religion then accept the supernatural level and are associated with the religious thrill. Both develop a ritualistic technique, with its frequent corollary of de-emotionalization or at least transmutation of the original emotions. On the other hand, the typical magical situation differs from the religious one in so far as it builds on constraint: the will or power of the magician dominates the situation. In the typical religious situation the will of the devotee is at best but a will to believe, whereas the will of the god or other divine personage becomes the dominant factor, bringing in its wake worship, supplication, prayer, and the like.

If the above reasoning is correct, what becomes of the alleged chronological priority of magic? When the present or the historical period in general is envisaged, it is clear that institutionalized religion dominates the field of man's belief and ritual; whereas magic survives among the minor byways of civilization in the form of more individualized as well as more elusive attitudes and ideas. But one may also attempt to reconstruct the rise of magic and religion beginning at some point in the remote prehistoric past. Then the picture changes. Magic and religion are then seen taking root in partly common, partly disparate ideas and emotions and then advancing through a series of further transformations. Intermingling and coalescing inextricably in the beginning, they later separate in the form of two diverging strands: the strand of religion, more definitely socialized and legalized, and the strand of magic, leading a more precarious existence in the dusk of legality and social recognition. Also, the trend in religion, in its less definitely institutionalized aspect, is towards greater subjective elaboration of the religious experience, whereas the course of magic separates into two main streams, one involving perfect ritualization, a pure technique, mechanical in method but supernatural in intent, the other embracing disjointed odds and ends of belief and attitude usually covered by the term "superstition."

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level to which they belong rises at once into prominence, and with it its emotional replica, the religious thrill.

Other authors than Frazer have contrasted magic and religion in various ways. It is claimed by some that religion represents the socialized, publicly accepted creed, while magic is individual, ostracized. It cannot be denied that the later developments of magic and religion give colour to this theory. The black magic of the Middle Ages, or even the harmful magical activities of the African magician as contrasted with the supposedly socially beneficial activities of the priest, are instances in point. But in many other instances, as for example in Australia or Melanesia or in the Malay Archipelago, it is impossible to separate magic from religion in point of social sanction. It must be remembered, moreover, that even an ostracized magic is in a sense socially sanctioned in so far as its tenets are recognized as real. Even black magic could not thrive in a magic-proof society.

Frazer's other contribution deals with the origin of exogamy specifically in its association with the Australian phratric and class divisions. "In the whole of history," exclaims Frazer, ". . . it would hardly be possible to find another human institution on which the impress of deliberate thought and purpose has been stamped more plainly than on the exogamous systems of the Australian aborigines."<sup>1</sup>

In what peculiarity, then, of the exogamous system does the author find such unequivocal evidence of "deliberate thought and purpose"? It will readily be seen that the two-moiety system, if associated with maternal descent, prevents the intermarriage of mothers and sons and of brothers and sisters; and when associated with paternal descent, it prevents the marriage of fathers and daughters and, once more, of brothers and sisters. It must, however, be noted that the intermarriage of fathers and daughters is not made impossible by the first type of organization, while the second does not prevent the intermarriage of mothers and sons. In the four-class system, where each phratry or moiety is subdivided into two classes, no loop-hole is left for such incestuous unions. In the four-class systems with paternal descent of moiety, the marriage of father and daughter is, of course, impossible; so also is the marriage of mother and son, as the children all belong to the complementary class of the father's phratry into which the mother may not marry. Similarly, with maternal descent of the phratry, the children belong to the complementary class of the mother's phratry into which the father may not marry, father-daughter marriage being thus excluded. It could also be shown that further extension of prohibited unions between relatives is achieved by the eight-class system.

Now, Frazer holds that the bisection of the original group, as well as the subsequent bisections resulting in the four- and eight-class systems, was conceived and carried out by "some inventive genius" — by this the powerful old men of Australian communities are meant — who instituted the system of exogamy, "at once so complex and so regular," in order to prevent the intermarriages of near kin. To enhance the verisimilitude of his conjecture the author refers to the opinion of those "who are best acquainted at first hand with the Australian savages" — such as Spencer and Gillen — to the effect that the Australian old men are "capable both of conceiving and of

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<sup>1</sup> *Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. IV, p. 121.

executing such social reforms as are implied in the institution of their present marriage system.”<sup>1</sup>

There is evidence in Frazer's work that the author was himself aware of the improbability of his sociological assumption. It is well known that Lewis H. Morgan attributed the institution of the Iroquoian clans to a deliberate legislative act of a great leader, his opinion in this case being supported not merely by those who knew the Iroquois best, but by the Iroquois themselves. Frazer rejects Morgan's theory: “It is no longer possible,” he argues, “to attribute the institution of these totemic clans to the sagacity of savage law-givers who devised and created them for the purpose of knitting together the various tribes by the ties of marriage and consanguinity. Yet that the subdivision of the whole community into clans had this effect is undeniable.”<sup>2</sup> But with reference to the Australian conditions Frazer himself advances an analogous hypothesis.

In fairness to the author it must be noted that a painful search will reveal another passage which, while contradicting the theory just expounded, indicates a sounder theoretical view. “We may reasonably suppose,” writes Frazer, “that all the marriages which are now formally interdicted by the various exogamous class systems, were in like manner uniformly reprobated by public opinion before the cumbrous machinery of exogamy was put in operation against them. In other words, we may assume that a moral objection to such marriages always preceded, and was the cause of, their legal prohibition.”<sup>3</sup> It is a far cry from this to an assumed feat of “some inventive genius” who instituted a system “at once so complex and so regular” in order to prevent the intermarriages of near kin!

Basic forms of social organization do not fall from heaven ready made, nor do they arise full-fledged from the minds of genial savage lawgivers. The time may come when man will learn to conceive of new forms of social, political, or economic structure and to fit them so well into the living organism of society as to ensure their persistence and smooth working. But the past knows no such examples. Only those forms of social grouping and functioning have so far shown a tendency to survive which, if they were at all deliberately introduced, were at least based on pre-existing tendencies and habits.<sup>4</sup> Politicians

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<sup>1</sup> *Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. IV, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 346-7.

<sup>4</sup> The lawgivers of antiquity, such as Solon or Kleisthenes, while apparently transforming the social structure of Attica, were always operating with pre-existing units and groupings.

and social students well know from the example of modern democracies how nearly impossible it is to create a new party (shades of the well-nigh defunct Bull Moose!) unless all the elements of such a party are already in existence, so that the formal act really means little more than the introduction of a fixed organization, the assuming or accepting of a name, and the like.<sup>1</sup>

Nor is this all. Were such a conscious origin of the phratries and classes conceivable, more specific reasons could be assigned why the emergence of these divisions as deliberate bars to the unions between certain relatives would seem highly improbable. Surely, if the introduction of the phratries and classes were prompted by a desire to eliminate incestuous unions, those first taken care of would have been the unions between mother and son, and father and daughter. Now, it was shown that in the two-moiety system with maternal descent the intermarriage of mother and son is effectively barred but not that of father and daughter, who here belong to opposite phratries. It might be argued that the tribes having this dual and maternal organization are in a stage of transition to the further subdivision into classes in which the father-daughter marriage would also be eliminated. But this conjecture could not possibly be sustained, for many tribes organized on the maternal two-phratry pattern are to be found in the south-east of Australia, as well as an equally large number of tribes organized on the paternal two-phratry pattern. Clearly, these tribes were so organized for untold generations, nor is there any indication of their incipient transformation into the four-class pattern of organization. If what the savage lawgivers intended was to prevent incestuous unions, is it conceivable that they should have started so effectively and then stopped half-way, leaving the road open to one of the two most objectionable unions?

Similarly, when the Soviet Government introduced its territorial and professional electoral units, these were based on the village mir and the industrial artel, which ancient and natural institutions had already been regarded as the proper foundations for a reconstituted Russian society by the pre-Marxian socialistic dreamers of the first half of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> It need not be implied that primitive organizers, such as the Australian chiefs or "old men," are unable to visualize a social mechanism or on occasion to polish off the rough edges of a clumsily working or imperfectly adjusted social system. That the opposite is true is no longer a subject of doubt to ethnologists. In Australia, for example, there are instances where intermarriages between tribes with discrepant social systems require such deliberate and thoughtful intervention on the part of the powers that be; and the situation is forthwith taken care of very effectively. The point cannot be treated in detail here. Instead, the curious reader is referred to Spencer and Gillen: *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 116-32, where the authors show with great clearness that an inspection of the class divisions of the Mara, Anula, and Binbinga tribes reveals a rearrangement of classes to provide for intertribal marriages, a rearrangement which must be recognized as deliberate.



But the case against Frazer's position is even stronger than this. For if it were asked whether these incestuous unions — the father-daughter marriage in the maternal two-phratry tribes, the mother-son marriage in the paternal two-phratry tribes — were of actual occurrence, the answer would be a categorical no. Just as everywhere else in the world, with negligible exceptions, these unions are here prohibited by special regulations *ad hoc*, and the instances of infraction are disappearingly few. To repeat, such unions are prohibited everywhere, whether the tribe is modern or primitive, and if the latter, whether it is organized on the basis of phratries or clans or of both or of neither.

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### III

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#### L. Lévy-Bruhl's Theories



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## L. Lévy-Bruhl's Theories

ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE THEORY of primitive thought made in recent years is that of Lévy-Bruhl in his book on the mental functions of primitive man.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Lévy-Bruhl represents the right wing, as it were, of the Durkheim school, but, as will be presently seen, his own contribution is quite distinct. Frazer's associationism and the rationalistic approach of Spencerian and Tylorian animism do not impress the French philosopher. These theories, he argues, try to infuse a logical note into the primitive world-view. They accept the postulate that the mind of early man operates as rationally in its reactions to experience as does the modern mind. But this, claims Lévy-Bruhl, it does not. With Durkheim he insists that primitive mentality is inseparable from collectivity. Ceremonies, myths, rules of behaviour, language, religion—all of these represent collective modes of action and reaction and must be regarded as expressions of a collective mentality. Now, different societies reveal great differences in the external elements of their cultures. These elements are the moulders of the mentalities of the several peoples; therefore the mentalities must be different. Thus the study of the primitive mind resolves itself into one of local types of mentality. To the extent to which such local studies bring comparable results, they may bring insight into primitive mentality in general.

Having reached this stage in his reasoning, the investigator finds himself face to face with well-nigh insurmountable difficulties. The way to a study of such local types of mentality is not by any means clear: the preliminary concrete investigations are lacking. Nevertheless, it is possible, by way of a tentative survey, to characterize these divergent types of mentality at least in so far as they may contain

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<sup>1</sup> *Les Fonctions mentales des sociétés inférieures* (Paris, 1912). German and English translations of the work are available. The author's two more recent books contain no new principles and need not concern us here. An abstract of Lévy-Bruhl's first book will be found in my review in the *American Anthropologist* for 1911.

certain common elements differentiating them from the "idea-system" of modern man.<sup>1</sup>

The first point, then, to be noted in connexion with these collective ideas is that they are not the product of the minds of individuals. On the contrary, with reference to individual mental processes the collective ones must be regarded as pre-existing. They are there when the individual appears to receive them. Irresistibly they force themselves upon the individual mind, and they remain when the individual passes away.

The distinctive peculiarity of collective ideas is that they are pre-logical or a-logical, meaning by this, not that they necessarily contradict logic, but that logical processes are frequently and even typically disregarded in their formation. Thus, in the magical and animistic universe the past may also be the present, a person may be in one place and at the same time in another or in a dream. A man or animal or thing is not only similar to but identical with its image or reflection or name. A South American Bororo is also an arara (parrot), a Central Australian bushman is also his churinga, or his reincarnated half-human, half-animal ancestor.

The comparison of objects and beings from the standpoint of their objective characteristics is outside the interest of this collective mentality. Its attention is centred on those variegated bonds which tie objects, beasts, men, and actions into closely knit groups that have nothing to do with objective form or substance and are based solely on ceremonial, magical, or other supernatural connexions. Within each such cycle of mystic relations a rapport is established between the things, beings, actions, which fall within its compass. This is the *principle of participation*, a concept and a term constituting the very core of Lévy-Bruhl's theory. Everything that falls within a mystic cycle of participation is to that extent *one*; and this oneness, this identity based on supernatural connexion, is reflected in the operations of the primitive mind.

Nor is it correct to assert, claims Lévy-Bruhl, that the magical connexions between things are established through the operation of the law of association. In the collective mentality the "associations" are given as primary factors, and what the student observes is a gradual

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<sup>1</sup> The term "idea-systems" may be fittingly used here to suggest the resemblance between Lévy-Bruhl's conception and the corresponding ideas of Teggart to which reference has been made before.

*dissociation* of such originally unified elements in the course of history on its mental side.<sup>1</sup>

In this connexion Lévy-Bruhl's attention is directed towards those strange customs described so interestingly by Van Gennep in his book, *Les Rites de passage*. Primitive custom bristles with these rites of passage: initiation ceremonies which carry the boy or girl through different phases of ceremonial participation; rites which usher a child into tribal membership, or those that accompany the adoption of a new member into a clan; rites which attest the passage of an individual to the rank of chieftaincy or kingship; rites that lead a bride into matrimony; those that mark the inception of a hunting period or the return from a voyage; and then those final rites which the soul or spiritual residue of a human being must leave behind before it is permitted to break off relations with its earthly associates.

In particular, Lévy-Bruhl directs attention to what he designates as the cycle of life and death, a series of ceremonially sanctioned periods through which an individual is made to pass among different tribes of the Melanesian Archipelago. When a child is born, its social worth approaches zero; hence it may be readily eliminated, at least among some tribes. Only after the ceremonial and public imposition of a name does the tribal participation of the individual begin. In the course of his life he passes through a series of ritualistic periods, each introducing him to an ever widening circle of relations, functions, rights, and restrictions. Then he dies. But the socio-ceremonial participation continues even after the first burial. Not until after the second burial are all bonds between the dead and the living broken. Even this break in participation may prove but temporary, for the departed spirit may be reborn again in the body of a child, to start, after the first public name-giving, upon its second cycle of socio-ceremonial participation.

Certain aspects of this cycle of participation involve, in the author's opinion, a disregard of the logical principle of contradiction. The individual who is physically dead is yet socio-ceremonially alive—until the second burial. Thus he is both dead and alive. The child, on the contrary, from birth to the ceremonial name-giving, is physically alive but socio-ceremonially dead. Thus it is both alive and dead.

Interesting comments on Lévy-Bruhl's cycle of life and death are

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that in this point Lévy-Bruhl endorses by implication the idea of Wundt whose concept of "mythological apperception" corresponds strictly to Lévy-Bruhl's original unity of these supernatural intuitions, as when the lightning is directly apperceived as a snake.

made by Rivers in his article "The Primitive Conception of Death."<sup>1</sup> In the course of his own investigations in Melanesia, Rivers found ample occasion to verify Lévy-Bruhl's conception and emphatically to endorse it, without, however, accepting all of Lévy-Bruhl's conclusions. During the early days of his acquaintance with the Melanesians, Rivers learned to associate the term *mate* with "dead" and *toa* with "alive" or "living." Before long, however, he discovered that this rendering of the terms was inaccurate. In illustration he cites an instance recorded by a missionary. The latter relates how on one occasion he witnessed what proved to be a burial ceremony. While preparations were going on, his attention was drawn to an old woman who was acting with striking vivacity. Presently, however, he became aware of the real purport of the ceremony and also realized, to his amazement, that the woman in question was the one to be buried. She was *mate* or "dead," for all socio-ceremonial purposes. There is not much use in such persons. If they are not actually dead, they "ought to be," as Rivers puts it. Hence, with irreproachable if somewhat ruthless logic, the final rites are performed and the burial takes place, notwithstanding the protests and groans of the *mate* — for not everyone accepts his fate as cheerfully as did the old woman in question.

So far Rivers is at one with Lévy-Bruhl, but he objects to the latter's interpretation. No contradiction is involved, he claims, for the individual is not really both dead and alive at the same time: for the natives he *is* dead, *mate*. The contradiction appears only if we combine our own attitude with that of the natives. But this, of course, we may not do. Rivers's own generalization is to the effect that the concept of death among these people is radically distinct from our own. "I must be content," concludes Rivers, "to have indicated the possibility that to the primitive mind death is not the unique and catastrophic event it seems to us, but merely a condition of passing from one existence to another, forming but one of a number of transitions, which began perhaps before his birth, and stand out as the chief memories of his life."

Rivers seems to be right in his censure upon Lévy-Bruhl's interpretation: the psychological estimate of primitive ideas should not be marred by the infusion of our own. But Rivers's own generalization seems equally erroneous; in the form, at least, which it takes in the above quotation it involves a partial misrepresentation of the

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<sup>1</sup> The *Hibbert Journal*, January 1921.

primitive attitude towards death. The unnamed child may be, for the time being, *mate*, dead; the dead man, between the first and the second burial, may be *toa*, alive. But these classifications are not applicable to all conditions. The unnamed child, for instance, may be maliciously killed, the taking of its life falling under the concept of murder; but the ghost of the dead man, between the first and the second burial, cannot be killed. Thus the concept of murder, an unjustifiable taking of a life, is connected with the physical span of existence, in conformity with our own ideas and the objective facts of the case. The theoretical inference is this: ideas such as *mate* and *toa* — and these are merely samples of a multiplicity of primitive notions often differing from our own — must be appraised as operative within a particular cycle of participation — in this case, the socio-ceremonial cycle. Outside of this there may be other ideas perhaps conflicting with these or partly overlapping them, ideas which belong to another cycle of participation, such as, in this case, the idea of murder.

That logically contradictory ideas may be entertained by the same people or individual is true enough, and this brings us back to Lévy-Bruhl's position. Are such contradictions and the non-objectivity of many of the underlying ideas distinctive of primitive mentality as contrasted with our own, and is primitive mentality throughout characterized by the presence of such ideas?

Reflection will show that the answer to both questions is no. Modern mentality is not characterized by the exclusive dominance of logic, nor is primitive mentality throughout a-logical.

What is the place of logical thought in modern society? It is in evidence, we discover, in the solution of problems, in science, philosophy, mathematics, also in applied science, as well as in what for short may be called "common sense." In the case of this latter faculty, however, good psychology is often more conspicuous than good logic; in fact, the psychology may be good precisely because the logic is poor. The conclusion is illogical, the reaction irrational, but this is the way people conclude and react — so common sense, with its psychological insight, tells us.

Now, this is significant, for a little further thought will disclose the fact — disheartening though it may seem to some — that logical thought plays but a strictly limited part in the totality of mental processes in our own society. And the closer we come to those levels of life which are thickly padded with emotion, the less conspicuous becomes the role of logic. Tradition, family associations, educational



setting, class-consciousness, national sentiment, racial prejudice, religious dogma, the violent shock of personal experience, the suggestions of propaganda, whether through books, lectures, journals, newspapers, or advertisements — these are the dominant influences which control our thoughts and reactions in matters economic, social, political, moral, religious.

But we must go further. Logic is without question the ideal and model of scientific thought. The demonstrations of the theorems in Euclid are perfect specimens of logical coherence and finality, but these demonstrations do not represent the thought process by means of which the theorems were reached. What they really represent are artificially simplified and condensed verifications of such thought processes.

The most logical thinker does not for any length of time think in logically connected propositions. The logically coherent thought may be the final outcome of his mental process, but it is not the process.<sup>1</sup>

Pre-logical mentality, then, is not foreign to modern society. Our minds are also driven by collective thought. As to the principle of contradiction, it may represent an impregnable stronghold of abstract logic, but not of psychology. For in the mind of man contradictory ideas and attitudes are as common today as they were yesterday. In fact, the very concept of contradiction is applicable to those psychic manifestations only when they are rationalized; in actual experience, on the other hand, they are not rationalized but lived.

And, again, is the mind of early man wholly submerged in pre-logical, irrational, collective ideas and attitudes? All who have come in contact with primitives, or have thought about them without prejudice, know that this is by no means so. Thus Durkheim speaks of the profane periods in the life of the Australian which contrast so strikingly with the periodically recurring ceremonial frenzy. Now, the profane period, in primitive Australia as in modern society, is the abode of common sense, reason, logic. Durkheim refers to this level in the Australian's experience as grey and drab. It is that, in fact, and so are logic and reason, as such. In his multitudinous industrial activities — crude though they may be — the Australian shows common sense in abundance. Even though he may not count further than five,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., in this connexion, my *Robots or Gods*, the chapter entitled "From 'Craft' to Science and Logic."

he can put two and two together very effectively. Nor does his wisdom extend only to the domain of material things, for evidence abounds of his shrewdness in matters human, and shrewdness is logic applied to psychology. The medicine-man's art of curing or inducing disease stands witness, not alone to his black magic, but also to his black logic, the logic which enables a man to hold his own, at worst, in dealing with another man, the same black logic which is one of the corner-stones of modern business methods.

Spencer certainly goes too far when he claims that, granting the average his premisses, his conclusions are the most rational that could be drawn. Of this ideal he often falls short, and so do we. But *many* of his conclusions *are rational*, and the less chance there is for his magic-suffused psychology to intercept the processes of reason, the more likely are they to be rational. It is for this reason that the semi-automatic and often unconscious mental processes involved in industry and economic pursuits bring such frequent evidence of a bedrock of reason and common sense below the stream of collective irrationality.<sup>1</sup>

Lévy-Bruhl deserves great credit for bringing out with startling incisiveness the importance of the principles of participation and of collectively driven thought in primitive mentality, but when he makes of these the differentia of primitive-man-psychological, his vision is at fault. There is a streak of logic as well as much irrationality in the make-up of the primitive mind; the same holds of the modern mind. The functions of logic and of pre-logical mentality, their scope and relative significance, are, it is true, not the same in the two instances. But this is another question. Had Lévy-Bruhl compared the manifestations of logic in modern man and in his early precursor, as well as the manifestations of collective mentality in the same two settings, his conclusions would have been different.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Robots or Gods*, Chapter ii.



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## IV

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### Wilhelm Wundt's Theories



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### Wilhelm Wundt's Theories<sup>1</sup>

WUNDT APPROACHED THE PROBLEM OF PRIMITIVE MENTALITY with a far broader and deeper equipment in scientific method than did Spencer, Tylor, or Frazer. As a student of psychology he was proof against the allurements of that somewhat off-hand interpretation of primitive thought of which these authors are so often guilty. He discarded the crude rationalism of Spencer and Tylor. To him early man was not an aboriginal thinker facing nature as a set of problems or questions to which animism or magic could provide an answer or solution. Wundt saw clearly that man's reactions to the world — and especially his earliest reactions — were least of all rational or deliberate; rather were they spontaneous and emotional. The associationism of Frazer also collapsed before Wundt's doctrine of apperception, in which the atomistic and analytical view of mind was supplemented by an approach in which its integrative and creative functions were emphasized.

Again, Wundt realized that the psychological foundations of civilization cannot be sought in the isolated individual, but that the group always actively co-operated in the production of attitudes and ideas. With great erudition and an originality that has often been underestimated, Wundt examined from this general standpoint the phenomena of language, art, religion and mythology, social organization and law.

Without espousing the doctrine of a separate folk-soul — a doctrine sponsored, for example, by such German philologist-philosophers as Steinthal and Lazarus — Wundt insisted that civilization was impossible without the interrelated experiences of individuals in communica-

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<sup>1</sup> Wundt's great work on folk-psychology, the *Völkerpsychologie*, is unfortunately not available for English readers. But a careful perusal of his *Elements of Folk-Psychology* will suffice to bring out the principal points of his theoretical attitude. Those who may want to acquaint themselves more thoroughly with Wundt's socio-psychological ideas are referred to the somewhat difficult article by H. K. Haeberlin: "The Theoretical Foundations of Wundt's Folk

tion. Without laying himself open to the accusation of over-emphasizing the social — the principal weakness of the Durkheim school — Wundt joined the ranks of most modern sociologists and ethnologists in stressing the social and cultural setting.

It is especially instructive to find that Wundt introduces his discussion of myth and religion by a many-sided examination of the workings of the human imagination in a volume on what is in fact a psychological history of art. He saw clearly that the entire domain of religion and mythology represented, on its conceptual side, but a projection into the external world of the ideas and fantasies of the human mind. Without reaching the striking formulation of Freud, Wundt established the psychological foundation of what the originator of psychoanalysis later called the "omnipotence of thought."

Wundt's attitude towards Frazer's conception of magic as a sort of primitive science is interesting in this connexion. In a luminous passage he disposes of the issue with finality. Thus there arises a paradoxical situation, writes Wundt in substance: on the one hand, science is extolled as the power that has destroyed mythology; on the other, mythology itself is conceived as a primitive science. Now, the destruction of mythology by science would only be feasible if the development of these two aspects of culture were regarded as radically distinct, whereas the identification of mythology with primitive science would presuppose a fundamental similarity of the two. The explanation of this apparent contradiction lies in the following. The experiences on the basis of which myths arise coincide with those which in time become the foundation of science, for both these kinds of experience consist in or take the form of ideas, emotions, affects, tropisms, or urges which are characteristic of the human psyche. But what differs are the processes of thought by means of which these common psychic elements are utilized and elaborated. These are radically distinct in science and mythology. Thus the mistake of the rationalistic theory consists in stressing the coincidence of the general empirical content of the psyche, which is in fact the same in science, mythology, or what not, without properly evaluating the highly distinctive elaboration to which this psychic material is subjected in mythology, on the one hand, and science, on the other.<sup>1</sup>

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Psychology," *Psychological Review*, Vol. XXIII (1916). A brief presentation of Wundt's contributions to science and philosophy will be found in my article: "Wilhelm Wundt, 1832-1920," in the *Freeman*, 1921. Cf., also, R. H. Lowie's discussion of Wundt's autobiography (*ibid.*).

<sup>1</sup> *Volkerpsychologie*, Vol. III, *Art*, p. 559. Cf. also *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, pp. 93-4.

The author displays an equally penetrating vision when, in dealing with what he calls the era of primitive man, he gives a general estimate of primitive mind and culture. "It is characteristic of primitive culture," he writes, "that it has failed to advance since immemorial times and this accounts for the uniformity prevalent in widely separated regions of the earth. This, however, does not at all imply that within the narrow sphere that constitutes his world the intelligence of primitive man is inferior to that of cultural man."<sup>1</sup> And, again: "Primitive man merely exercises his ability in a more restricted world; his horizon is essentially narrower because of his contentment under these limitations. It is not denied, of course, that there may have been and, indeed, doubtless was a time when man occupied a lower intellectual plane and approximated more nearly to the animal state which preceded that of human beings. This earliest and lowest level of human development is, however, not accessible to us."<sup>2</sup>

In dealing with the tools and weapons of earliest man Wundt definitely rejects the rationalism of early authors, while laying due emphasis on accident and uncontrolled experience. In his attempt to envisage the origin of the returning boomerang of the Australians, for example, Wundt projects the following picture: "The word is probably familiar to all, but the nature of the weapon is not so well known, especially its peculiarly characteristic form by virtue of which, if it fails to strike its object, it flies back to the one who hurled it. The boomerang, which possesses this useful characteristic, is, in the first place, a bent wooden missile, pointed at both ends. That this curved form has a greater range and strikes truer to aim than a straight spear, the Australian, of course, first learned from experience. The boomerang, however, will not return if it is very symmetrically constructed; on the contrary, it then falls to the ground, where it remains. Now it appears that the two halves of this missile are asymmetrical. One of the halves is twisted spirally, so that the weapon, if thrown forward obliquely, will, in accordance with the laws of ballistics, describe a curve that returns upon itself. This asymmetry was also discovered accidentally. In this case the discovery was all the more likely, for primitive weapons were never fashioned with exactitude. That this asymmetry serves a useful purpose, therefore, was first revealed by experience. As a result, however, primitive man began to copy as

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<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.



faithfully as possible those implements which most perfectly exhibited this characteristic. Thus, this missile is not a weapon the origination of which required exceptional inventive ability, though, of course, it demanded certain powers of observation. The characteristics, accordingly, that insured the survival of the boomerang were discovered accidentally and then fixed through an attentive regard to those qualities that had once been found advantageous."<sup>1</sup>

A similar standpoint appears in the author's explanation of the feathered arrow. Writes Wundt: "The feathers are usually supposed to have been added to insure the accurate flight of the arrow. And this accuracy is, indeed, the resultant effect. As in the case of the boomerang, however, we must again raise the question: How did man come to foresee this effect of the mechanical conditions of which he had, of course, not the slightest knowledge? The solution of this problem probably lies in the mental association of the discharged arrow with a flying bird that pierces the air by the movements of its feathers. Thus, in the arrow, man copied the mode of movement of the bird. He certainly did not copy it, however, with the thought that he was causing movement in a mechanical way. We must bear in mind that for primitive man the image of a thing is in reality always equivalent to the thing itself. Just as he believes that his spirit resides in his picture, and is, therefore, frequently seized with fright when a painter draws a likeness and carries it away with him, so also does the feathered arrow become for him a bird. In his opinion, the qualities of the bird are transferred by force of magic to the arrow. In this case, indeed, the magical motive is in harmony with the mechanical effect."<sup>2</sup>

Whether this particular application of magical idiosyncrasy is true to the facts or not it is, of course, impossible to say, but Wundt's hypothesis indicates a very common type of origin of useful appliances. It may be noted in this connexion that among many tribes the arrow feathers are not attached parallel to the length of the shaft, but in a spiral. The screw-like effect of this device imparts to the flying arrow a revolving motion, the result of which is greater accuracy of aim and a more dangerous wound. Now, the aboriginal bowman was, of course, quite ignorant of the relevant mechanical principles, but accidental discovery must have readily revealed to him the advantages of an arrow with feathers not quite parallel to the shaft. Once this discovery

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<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, pp. 27-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

was made, the further evolution of the spiral attachment was merely a matter of time.

While we must give due credit to Wundt's perspicacity, certain reservations are in place here. It is true that professional inventors were unknown in early times; also, that many devices bearing evidence of great ingenuity were in the main accidental and unpremeditated discoveries. Nevertheless, it is possible to underestimate the ingenuity of early man. While very little relevant material for a concrete examination of this topic is available, the analogy with the craftsman and mechanic of history cannot but suggest that his prehistoric colleague must have derived somewhat similar stimulation from his multiple experiences with materials, processes, and situations. Such experiences, as is well known, stimulate the application of the trial-and-error method, with its concomitant discoveries, inventions, and improvements. It would thus be unwise to ascribe to the primitive mechanic merely a passive part in the origination of inventions. Many a happy thought must have crossed his mind, nor was he wholly unfamiliar with the thrill that comes from an idea effective in action.<sup>1</sup>

Wundt's position in regard to the theory of cultural evolution also differs markedly from the positions of his predecessors. He no longer believes in the universal uniformity of cultural advance, in application either to culture as a whole or to its separate aspects. Wundt often speaks of certain trends or principles of historical development which manifest themselves in multiple similarities, but he is not blind to the fact that in the complexity of historical incidents these principles scarcely ever appear except in disguised form, and that uniqueness remains a characteristic of individual historical events or cultural forms.

Wundt's historical perspective is particularly enriched by his constant insistence on the multiplicity of motives and purposes which characterizes the development of cultural forms, and the constant tendency of such motives and purposes to shifts and transmutations. In this connexion one notes with regret that in dealing with early processes, the so-called "first origins," Wundt often abandons his own well-

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<sup>1</sup> It must therefore not be assumed that invention in advance of accidental discovery is inconceivable. The bow and arrow is a case in point. It is not easy to see how the propelling properties of a tautened string could be discovered unless it were already properly attached to a bow. In other words the stringed bow must be there before its properties can be revealed. In view of this and similar instances, it must be assumed that here and there man's imagination anticipated experience: he constructed a mechanical device conceptually, subsequently to test intuition by performance.

tested principles and returns to the habit of classical anthropologists of accounting for cultural factors by singular origins and motives. Wundt's failure to do justice to this type of problem may be illustrated by a few examples.

The following extract exemplifies the way in which Wundt deals with the origin of the domestication of the dog, as well as with the first beginnings of art:

"Closely connected with the real dwelling of primitive man, the cave, are two further phenomena that date back to earliest culture. As his constant companion, primitive man has a single animal, the dog, doubtless the earliest of domestic animals. Of all domestic animals, this is the one that has remained most faithful to man down to the present time. The inhabitant of the modern city still keeps a dog if he owns any domestic animal at all, and as early as primitive times the dog was man's faithful companion. The origin of this first domestic animal remains obscure. The popular notion would seem to be that man felt the need of such a companion, and therefore domesticated the dog. But if one calls to mind the dogs that run wild in the streets of Constantinople,<sup>1</sup> or the dog's nearest relative, the wolf, one can scarcely believe that men ever had a strong desire to make friends of these animals. According to another widely current view, it was man's need of the dog as a helper in the chase that led to its domestication. But this also is one of those rationalistic hypotheses based on the presupposition that man always acts in accordance with a preconceived plan, and thus knew in advance that the dog would prove a superior domestic animal, and one especially adapted to assist in the chase. Since the dog possessed these characteristics only after its domestication, they could not have been known until this had occurred, and the hypothesis is clearly untenable. How, then, did the dog and man come together in the earliest beginnings of society? The answer to this question, I believe, is to be found in the cave, the original place of shelter from rain and storm. Not only was the cave a refuge for man, but it was equally so for animals, and especially for the dog. Thus it brought its dwellers into companionship. Furthermore, fire, after man had learned the art of kindling it, may have attracted the animal by its warmth. After the dog had thus become the companion of man, it accompanied him in his activities, including

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<sup>1</sup> In fairness to the much maligned Turk, it may be noted that the notorious "wild dogs" of Constantinople have long since gone the way of old Turkey.

that of the chase. Here, of course, the nature of the carnivorous animal asserted itself; as man hunted, so also did the animal. The dog's training, therefore, did not at all consist in being taught to chase the game. It did this of itself, as may be observed in the case of dogs that are not specifically hunting dogs. The training consisted rather in breaking the dog of the habit of devouring the captured game. This was accomplished only through a consciously directed effort on the part of man, an effort to which he was driven by his own needs. Thus, it is the cave that accounts for the origin of the first domestic animal, and also, probably, for the first attempt at training an animal. But there is still another gain for the beginnings of culture that may probably be attributed to the cave in its capacity of a permanent habitation. Among primitive peoples, some of whom are already advanced beyond the level here in question, it is especially in caves that artistic productions may be found. These consist of crude drawings of animals and, less frequently, of men. Among the Bushmen, such cave pictures are frequently preserved from destruction for a considerable period of time. Natural man, roaming at will through the forests, has neither time nor opportunity to exercise his imagination except upon relatively small objects or upon the adornment of his own body. But the semi-darkness of the cave tends, as do few other places, to stimulate the reproductive imagination. Undisturbed by external influences, and with brightnesses and colours enhanced by the darkness, the memory images of things seen in the open, particularly those of the animals of the primeval forest, rise to consciousness and impel the lonely and unoccupied inhabitant to project them upon the wall. Such activity is favoured by the fact, verifiable by personal introspection, that memory images are much more vivid in darkness and semi-darkness than in the light of day. Thus, it was in the cave, the first dwelling-place of man, that the transition was made, perhaps for the first time, from the beginnings of a graphic art, serving the purposes of adornment or magic, to an art unfettered except by memory. It was an art of memory in a twofold sense: it patterned its objects after the memory of things actually observed, and it sought to preserve in memory that which it created."<sup>1</sup>

This discussion strikingly reveals Wundt's sanity as well as the limitations of his attitude. The derivation of the domestication of the dog from natural factors, from a common dwelling, common hunting-

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<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, pp. 22-4.

habits, mutual benefit, and a minimum of deliberate planning, must be recognized as admirably carried out. The psychological arguments advanced to explain the presence and, in part at least, the nature of the realistic art of the cave, are forceful. But in both instances Wundt fails to utilize his own idea of the multiplicity of motives which he has elsewhere employed with such admirable effect. The dog is found as the companion of man practically everywhere, including innumerable localities where no such fixed dwelling-places as caves were provided by nature. Would Wundt assume, then, that the domestication of the dog originated among cave-men and spread by diffusion to the rest of mankind? No, this hypothesis he would surely reject. But then other motives must be provided for the origin of the institution compatible with the habits and circumstances of caveless men. The same principle can be utilized to censure his hypothesis with reference to primitive realistic art.

Another illustration of Wundt's failure to escape the allurements of monogenetic derivation is his hypothesis about the origin of primitive dress and ornament. It runs like this:

"In connexion with the external culture of primitive man we have already noted his meagre dress, which frequently consisted merely of a bast cord about the loins, with leaves suspended from it. What was the origin of this dress? In the tropical regions, where primitive man lives, it was surely not the result of need for protection; nor can we truthfully ascribe it to modesty, as is generally done on the ground that it is the genital parts that are most frequently covered. In estimating the causes, the questions of primary importance are rather: where did the very first traces of dress appear, and what were its most permanent parts? The answer to the latter question, however, is to be found not in the apron but in the *loin-cord*, which is occasionally girt about the hips without any further attempt at dress. Obviously this was not a means of protection against storm and cold; nor can modesty be said to have assisted in the development of this article, which serves the purposes both of dress and of adornment. But what was its real meaning? An incident from the life of the Veddahs may perhaps furnish the answer to this question. When the Veddah enters into marriage, he binds a cord about the loins of his prospective wife. Obviously this is nothing else than a form of the widely current 'cord-magic,' which plays a not inconsiderable role even in present-day superstition. Cord-magic aims to bring about certain results by means of a firmly fastened cord. This cord is not a symbol, but is, as all symbols

originally were, a means of magic. When a cord is fastened about a diseased part of the body and then transferred to a tree, it is commonly believed that the sickness is magically transplanted into the tree. If the tree is regarded as representing an enemy, moreover, this act, by a further association, is believed to transfer sickness or death to the enemy through the agency of the tree. The cord-magic of the Veddahs is obviously of a simpler nature than this. By means of the cord which he has himself fastened, the Veddah endeavours to secure the faithfulness of his wife. The further parts of primitive dress were developments of the loin-cord, and were worn suspended from it. Coincidentally with this, the original means of adornment make their appearance. Necklaces and bracelets, which have remained favourite articles of feminine adornment even within our present culture, and fillets about the head, which, among some primitive peoples, are likewise worn chiefly by the women, are further developments of the loin-cord, transferred, as it were, to other parts of the body. And as the first clothing was attached to the loin-cord, so also were the bracelet and fillet, and particularly the necklace, employed to carry other early means of protective magic; namely, amulets. Gradually the latter also developed into articles of adornment, preferably worn, even today, about the neck.”<sup>1</sup>

Here once more the artificiality of Wundt's position is apparent. Quite apart from the feasibility of the particular interpretation given — for in itself the utilization of an attractive charm, as implied by Wundt, is common enough — it is patently absurd to reduce the origin of garments and ornaments to this one magical source. A loin-cord is not worn everywhere, nor are parts of garment or ornament always attached to it in the way described by Wundt. In numerous regions, moreover, climatic conditions necessitate the wearing of other garments than those mentioned by Wundt. As to ornament, adornment of the human figure is only one of its forms, and its sources are manifestly multiform. If this much is admitted, what is the justification for deriving human adornment from this one source?

We have noted Wundt's guarded attitude towards uniformitarian evolutionism. But this also breaks down more than once under the stress of attractive hypotheses. To mention only one instance: Wundt assumes that animal-worship everywhere preceded the worship of human beings. Animals were worshipped as ancestors long before

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<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Folk-Psychology*, pp. 85-6.

human beings or anthropomorphic gods became the objects of the same attitude. The worship of human ancestors, called by Wundt "manism," thus remains as a final product of this evolution; the animal cult having lost its power, the ideas of descent connected with it linger on. "The pure animal cult," writes Wundt, "can be recognized by the trait that the living animals, but never living man or supernatural beings possessed of human qualities, became the subjects of worship. The cult of anthropomorphic gods, on the other hand, which remains after the decay of all other cult forms directed towards the animal, represents the other end of this series; and between these two extremes — the pure animal cult and the pure human cult — all the other stages fit in as transitional links."<sup>1</sup>

So much for Wundt's occasional lapses into drastic evolutionism. But Wundt's work nevertheless marks a notable advance over the position of the classical English anthropologists, with its rationalism, individualism, and unilinear evolutionism.

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<sup>1</sup> *Volkerpsychologie*, Vol. IV, *Mythus und Religion*, Part 1, p. 236.

## Sigmund Freud's Theories





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Sigmund Freud's Theories<sup>1</sup>

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PSYCHOANALYSIS HAD ITS BEGINNING AS A NEW TECHNIQUE IN the clinical treatment of certain nervous disorders. It arose out of observations made by Freud on patients subjected to hypnotic treatment and presently was transformed by him into a substitute technique in place of hypnotism. In the course of a few years of psychoanalytic practice on the part of Freud and his disciples, so many new facts of psychological import were brought to light that the ideology of psychoanalysis soon grew beyond the scope of conventional psychology, bringing into being what practically amounts to a new psychological system. Nor were the psychoanalysts satisfied to deal with the individual alone. At first hesitatingly, then with daring strides, psychoanalysis was applied to the interpretation of art, religion, philosophy, ethics, education, criminology, and history. Relevant literature now numbers hundreds of titles, but for our purpose it will suffice to deal briefly with Freud's own attempts to illumine analytically certain correspondences in the psychic life of primitives, on the one hand, and of neurotics, on the other.

In dealing with animism and magic Freud asserts that the fundamental basis of all magic lies in the mistaking of an ideal connexion for a real one, a formulation which will earn the assent of most students of these phenomena. This is how a doll can be made to impersonate

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<sup>1</sup> In order to follow the argument of this section it is not necessary to have been psychoanalysed nor even to possess a technical knowledge of psychoanalysis, but a general familiarity with Freud's doctrine is a prerequisite. For this purpose Freud's *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, which will suffice for an elementary orientation, is recommended. A clear although somewhat thin presentation of the bearing of psychoanalysis on the social sciences will be found in two articles by Rank and Sachs: "The Significance of Psychoanalysis for the Mental Sciences," in the *Psychoanalytic Review* for 1915. An interesting early attempt to correlate certain aspects of primitive ideology with individual psychic phenomena as revealed by psychoanalysis was made by Abraham in his *Dreams and Myth (Nervous and Mental Diseases Monograph Series, Vol. XV, 1913)*. Freud's own theory which is discussed in this study, will be found in his book, *Totem and Taboo*, but the references are to the original German articles in the *Imago*, 1912-13. This journal, started in 1912 and edited by Freud, is devoted exclusively to the application of psychoanalysis to the social sciences.

a distant enemy whose sickness or death may be brought about by maltreating the doll. A similar psychology underlies the processes of so-called fertilizing magic, where various physical manipulations are believed to bring about rain. The performed act, by its similarity to the desired result, evokes an ideational reproduction of the latter, thus kindling the belief that the result has actually been attained. The moving principle in magic is man's desires, which are realized by being psychically enacted and then objectified.<sup>1</sup> The disregard of the limitations of time and space, so characteristic of magical idiosyncrasy, is nothing but a projection into objective reality of a similar disregard so characteristic of thought. The whole animistic world, the realm of supernaturalism, is permeated by the "omnipotence of thought." Now, Freud insists that a similar substitution of ideas for things is a typical symptom of the neuroses. The frequently observed "guilty conscience" of the neurotic, for example, is rooted in his criminal thoughts objectified by him as criminal acts.

Following in the footsteps of the evolutionists and others, Freud draws attention to the parallelism between the individual and the race, in so far as the ontogenetic development of the psyche reproduces the transformation of attitudes in history. The sex life of the individual, at first characterized by a self-sufficient preoccupation with the ego, is later centred in the parents, to find a final and matter-of-fact realization in the acceptance of normal adult sexuality. Similarly, early magic and animism are dominated by the omnipotence of thought in which man is all-powerful: desire, ideationally vivified, becomes its own fulfilment; later, religion appears, in which a part of man's power is surrendered to supernatural beings; and last of all comes science, in the name of which man accepts as his guiding principle the objectively verifiable realities of the world, having, at last, learned to know his real power by accepting its limitations.<sup>2</sup>

Returning once more to the idea of the omnipotence of thought as manifested in magic, Freud cites the following example familiar to most ethnologists: It is often observed, he writes, that when the men of a primitive tribe start out for a great hunt or war raid or to gather precious plants, the women at home are subjected to a great number

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<sup>1</sup> This projection and objectivation of psychic states as an important principle in the interpretation of magic and religion has also been emphasized by Wundt, as well as by Simmel (cf. his *Die Religion*, p. 15). See, in this connexion, my *Robots or Gods*, especially Chapters ii and v.

<sup>2</sup> Freud is also at one with Wundt in asserting that art has inherited from religion the substitution of mind for matter, for in art the ideal becomes the real, and thought its own objectivation.

of oppressive taboos. The observance of these taboos is regarded by the natives as a condition for the success of the enterprise. It requires little perspicacity to realize, Freud believes, that this far-reaching force is nothing else but the home-bound thoughts of the men themselves, the "homesickness of the distant ones." Behind this ideological masquerade, adds the analyst, lies hidden the good psychological insight that the men will do their best only when feeling no concern about the behaviour of the women whom they have left at home.

In dealing with the subject of taboos Freud once more draws attention to the fact that in taboos as well as in the "avoidances" of neurotics the source of the proscribed actions is unknown to the human agents; there is also the common fear that transgression will result in harm to some person or persons. Again, the taboo is infectious. Any person or thing that comes in touch with the tabooed object or person or action becomes itself taboo; similarly in the case of the neurotic, there are "impossible" things and persons, and anything that comes in touch with such persons or things becomes itself "impossible." In both situations, finally, there are certain ceremonials which can be gone through, such as purification by water and the like, by means of which the transgression of a taboo can be expiated.

Thus Freud is led to believe that some of the most widespread taboos, among which are those of sex, are based on ancient and deep-rooted urges of which society is not aware but which persist in the unconscious of individuals. Against these urges the taboos are directed, and the infectiousness of the transgressor is based on the unconscious recognition that his example may prove attractive, because in the transgression the urge is realized. Hence the avoidance of the transgressor: he becomes taboo.

Turning, at last, to his main topic, totemism, Freud once more emphasizes the analogy between the regard for animals characteristic of totemism and a similar attitude observable in certain psychoneuroses. Freud cites his well-known analysis of a five-year-old boy with his fear of horses. Another instance is that of the boy Arpad, analysed by Ferenczi, who exhibited a mixed attitude of love and fear towards fowl. In these two, as in all similar cases, psychoanalytic treatment reveals the presence of an ambivalent attitude towards the father, which is transferred to the animal against which the attitude is apparently directed.

With enviable courage Freud passes from these instances dealing with individuals to the group attitude towards the totem. If the totem

animal, he argues, can be shown to be the father in disguise, then the two fundamental taboos of totemism — not to kill the totem nor to marry a woman of the same totem — receive their common explanation. They correspond to the two crimes of Oedipus who killed his father and married his mother, and to the two arch-desires of the child, the unsatisfactory repression or revival of which probably lies at the root of all psychoneuroses.

Then Freud proceeds to give some illustrations of totemic sacrifice, a subject once made popular by the researches of Robertson Smith. He refers to the communal partaking of the sacred animal and the consequent feeling of guilt which finds its expression and resolution in the torture of a scapegoat.

Thus the basis is laid for a new interpretation of totemism. It is this:

In very early times, before organized society or religion, man lived in so-called Cyclopean families, in which the sex rights were monopolized by the dominant old male, while the younger men, his sons, had to submit to the restrictions imposed by him or be killed or expelled. The great dominant male, the father, was revered by the others for his power and wisdom, but he was also hated on account of his monopolistic prerogatives. One day a great tragedy occurred in such a primitive community. The brothers banded together — encouraged perhaps, adds Freud, by the invention of a new weapon — and dared to do together what each one had long desired in secret: they murdered the father. Then they consumed his body in the assurance of thus acquiring his prowess.<sup>1</sup>

The patricidal act having been committed, the sons, tortured by remorse, reverted to a positive attitude towards the father. Seized by the desire to be obedient to him ("*nachträglicher Gehorsam*"), they decided to continue the taboo the oppressive character of which had led to the murder; namely, to abstain from sex contact with the women of the group. The consciousness of common guilt became the root of the new social bond. Thus arose the clan of brothers, protected and reinforced by the taboo on killing a clan-mate, so that the fate of the father might not befall any of the brothers. The totem of the clan is nothing but the transfigured reminiscence of the father; and the totemic sacrifice, an occasion for both joy and sorrow, is the dramatization of the remote tragedy in which the jubilant brothers murdered their

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<sup>1</sup> *Imago*, No. 2, 1913, p. 392.

despot father and, having accomplished the horrible deed, conscience-stricken, re-imposed upon themselves the oppressive taboo in the name of which the murder had been committed.

Freud goes still further. In the central setting of the Greek tragedy he discovers another cultural symbolization of the gruesome event of earliest antiquity. The hero's part is to suffer, for he is but a dramatized memory of the murdered father. The sympathetic chorus are the patricidal brothers, but in this setting their part in the original tragedy is disguised under the cloak of a responsive and sympathetic attitude towards the hero, a psychological subterfuge with which, in the domain of the individual psyche, psychoanalytic technique has made us familiar.

Thus four great institutions of mankind are ultimately reducible to one basic event, a common psycho-sociological source. Common guilt lay at the root of the new social system, the clan, the primitive society. Consciousness of the guilt expressed itself in a worshipful regard for the totem "father," the earliest religion. In expiation of the crime was self-imposed the rule of exogamy, the great sex taboo, the earliest revelation of morality. In the domain of art, finally, Greek tragedy re-enacted the ancient deed in an expiatory disguise.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible here to furnish a detailed critique of Freud's views — that would involve a systematic examination of the tenets of psychoanalysis — but we may at least indicate the direction in which such a critique would lie. Freud's formulation of the principle of the "omnipotence of thought" as underlying the magical universe, leaves little to be desired. It must be kept in mind, however, that the principle applies to modern society as well, as I had occasion to point out in discussing Lévy-Bruhl's position. If this is so, the analogy in this respect between the primitive man and the neurotic, loses much of its force, except to the extent that the abnormal psyche is once more shown to be but an extreme and often one-sided variant of the normal psyche. The same comment can be made on Freud's treatment of taboo. As to

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<sup>1</sup> To this Freud adds a foot-note which is worth reproducing as a typical combination of modesty and conceit. Says Freud: "Accustomed to being misunderstood, I deem it useful to emphasize that the above theoretical deductions do not involve an underestimation of the complexity of the discussed phenomena. All that is intended is to add another factor to the known or as yet to be discovered sources of religion, morality, and society, a factor deducible from the demands of psychoanalysis. A final interpretative synthesis I must leave to others. In this case, however, it lies in the nature of the new contribution that it will necessarily occupy a central position in that synthesis, although great affective resistances will have to be overcome before such a position is acceded to."

To this I add an exclamation mark as the only possible comment.

the analogy between the three stages of sex development in the individual and the magic-religion-science series in history, the thought has at best but a metaphorical significance. Were one to admit a general parallelism of cultural and individual development — an admission that would have to be flanked with such formidable reservations as to leave but little semblance of parallelism — it would remain strange that magic, religion, and science, as successive historical eras, should have been likened to the stages of sex development rather than to the corresponding ideological transformations of the individual.

But the part of Freud's system which concerns us most is his theory of totemism. There are a number of minor objections which in themselves negate the feasibility of the author's conception. Totemic sacrifice is a phenomenon practically unknown to ethnologists. Robertson Smith's "instances" were all based on reconstructed material. It is thus a highly arbitrary procedure on the part of Freud to accept evidence rejected by those familiar with the facts, merely because it meets the needs of his theoretical structure.

Further, the idea of a primitive Cyclopean family is itself a figment.<sup>1</sup> The nearest approach to it in the domain of early life is found in Australia, with its sex and other prerogatives enjoyed by the old men. Rivers's Melanesian gerontocracy is, once more, a purely speculative conception. Moreover, it is a far cry from such sex prerogatives of the elders in a highly organized social system (as in Australia) to the monopolistic sex rights of a despot father in a Cyclopean family!

Again, the eating of the father by the patricidal brothers is a notion which doubtless would have met with derision in the aboriginal fraternity itself, nor is it pleasing to the ethnologist. The probable extent of early cannibalism has often been exaggerated. Man has never used man as a regular article of diet. There has been some ceremonial eating of man, war victims have occasionally been consumed (as in Polynesia), here and there human flesh was used in cases of severe famine. But *we do not hear of the eating of relatives*. To assume a condition which is psychologically improbable and remains unsupported by ethnographic data is to transgress the bounds of permissible speculation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Cyclopean family was introduced into ethnology by Atkinson (see his essay on "Tribal Law" in Andrew Lang's book *Social Origins*), who claimed Darwin as his authority. The latter refers to certain conditions obtaining among some of the higher anthropoids, on the basis of which Atkinson built up his theory of the Cyclopean family. This idea was discredited by later zoologists.

But suppose, for the sake of argument, that all the objections here enumerated have been waived or successfully disposed of by Freud. There still remains one vital criticism which leaves the theory suspended in a void, as it were, without any foundation whatsoever in the known facts of history or biology. Suppose the original tragedy, the patricidal act of the brothers, had actually taken place, with all the immediate psychological consequences assumed by Freud. Even so, by what means can these facts be brought into relation with those subsequent historical phenomena of society, religion, morality, and art, the roots of all of which Freud posits in that ancient and tragic enactment of the Oedipus complex? Freud does not here utilize tradition, "social inheritance," as a link between the generations. What link, then, does he assume? That of a *racial unconscious*, propagated by inheritance from generation to generation and enriched on its way by the psychological and cultural experiences of its temporary human carriers. In this mechanism, then, a sort of variant of the "inheritance of acquired characters," lies the dynamic principle of the racial unconscious, and with it stands or falls most of what psychoanalysts have contributed to the interpretation of social science.<sup>1</sup>

But modern biology turns a deaf ear to the claims of use inheritance. In the light of what the biologist knows and does not know, this alleged process is naught but "inheritance by magic," to use Kroeber's phrase. For all we know or can convincingly assume, one generation receives nothing from its precursor beyond the general psycho-physical inheritance of the race, plus the accumulated cultural possessions acquired through education and the other channels of cultural transfer.

The assumption of a psychic continuity between the generations is

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<sup>1</sup> Freud himself is by no means unaware of the slippery ground he is treading. He writes in substance: We have assumed throughout that there exists a group psyche in which psychic processes take place as they do in individuals. In particular, we assumed that the consciousness of guilt persists through thousands of years and remains potent in generations of men who know nothing of the original criminal deed. We assumed that emotional reactions which could have originated in generations of sons maltreated by their fathers persisted through generations in which the father was eliminated and with him the source of the irritating tension. Freud proceeds to confess that these are serious commitments. He feels, however, that they are inevitable. Without the assumption of a group psyche—such is his categorical statement—and of the continuity of human emotions which make it possible to transcend the interruption of the psychic process through the passing away of individuals, there can be no folk-psychology. If the psychic processes of one generation are not communicated to the next, if each generation must develop its own psychic adjustment to life, then there can be in this domain no progress, no development. This, then, is the crux of the matter! *Is* there development, *is* there progress in the psychic life of individuals beyond that progress which is a reflection of cultural cumulation and advance? Perhaps most readers of these pages will agree that this is more than doubtful.



but an alluring fantasy. The willingness to accept it as true, in the face of contradictory historical and biological evidence, may therefore be regarded as a curious example of that "omnipotence of thought" which Freud identifies with the primitive mind — and that of the neurotic.

*PART THREE*

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TOTEMISM



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# I

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## Totemism, An Analytical Study



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# I

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## Totemism, An Analytical Study

### I

#### INTRODUCTION

A TOTEM IS A CLASS OF MATERIAL OBJECTS WHICH A SAVAGE regards with superstitious respect, believing that there exists between him and every member of the class an intimate and altogether special relation" <sup>1</sup> — such are the opening words of Frazer's little classic on totemism in which this aspect of primitive life received its first systematic elaboration. Since then the factual background of the subject has grown tremendously, and with it the number of theoretical interpretations. This notwithstanding, Frazer's position still deserves careful scrutiny.

Frazer opens his discussion by dividing totems "considered in relation to men" into three categories — the clan totem, common to the whole clan and hereditary; the sex totem, one common to all the males, another to all the females, of a tribe; and the individual totem, belonging to a single individual and not hereditary.<sup>2</sup> Under the heading "Individual Totems" Frazer discusses mainly the various beliefs and practices associated with the manitou of the North American Indians. In justification of a discussion of "individual totems" on a par with clan totemism, he advances the fact that "individuals also have their own special totems, i.e., classes of objects (generally species of animals), which they regard as related to themselves by those ties of mutual respect and protection which are characteristic of totemism."<sup>3</sup> A distinction is made, by the way, between fetishism and totemism, in the statement that "sometimes the okkis or manitoos acquired by dreams are not totems but fetiches, being not classes of objects but individual objects."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Frazer: *Totemism*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56; also pp. 2, 15.

As "sex totems" Frazer discusses the sacred animals "whose name each individual of the sex bears," found among the tribes of New South Wales and Victoria, and described by Fison and Howitt<sup>1</sup> and later by Howitt.<sup>2</sup> Each individual of the sex bears the name of his sacred animal, regarding it "as his or her brother or sister respectively, not killing it nor suffering the opposite sex to kill it. These sacred animals therefore," concludes Frazer, "answer strictly to the definition of totems."<sup>3</sup> He admits, however, that the clan totem "is by far the most important of all."<sup>4</sup>

In analysing clan totemism Frazer points out that it is "both a religious and a social system," the religious side consisting in a special attitude of the clansmen towards their totem, the social side in their special attitude towards each other. Frazer proceeds to specify a number of phenomena belonging to the religious side of totemism. The clansmen bear the name of the totem, and "commonly" trace their descent from it.<sup>5</sup> Some cases are mentioned in which the belief in totemic descent is absent. He adds, however, that "in some myths the actual descent from the totem seems to have been rationalized away."<sup>6</sup> The totemic taboos are introduced as a psychological consequence of the belief in descent: "Believing himself to be descended from, and therefore akin to, his totem, the savage naturally treats it with respect. If it is an animal he will not, as a rule, kill nor eat it."<sup>7</sup> Similar prohibitions apply to plant totems. The clansmen, moreover, "are often forbidden to touch the totem or any part of it, and sometimes they may not even look at it."<sup>8</sup> Some examples of cross-totems are given, the term being defined as "a totem which is neither a whole animal or plant, nor a part of one particular species of animal or plant, but is a particular part of all (or a number of species of) animals or plants."<sup>9</sup>

A man cares for and respects his totem, expecting help and protection in return.<sup>10</sup> Sometimes the totem gives the clansmen information by means of omens.<sup>11</sup> "In order, apparently, to put himself more fully

<sup>1</sup> See Frazer's note, *Totemism*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Howitt: *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 148-51.

<sup>3</sup> Frazer: *Totemism*, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13. On pp. 18 and 19 mention is made of Australian food-prohibitions which do not refer to totems but seem to vary with age.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

under the protection of the totem, the clansman is in the habit of assimilating himself to the totem by dressing in the skin or other part of the totem animal, arranging his hair and mutilating his body so as to resemble the totem, and representing the totem on his body by cicatrices, tattooing, or paint." <sup>1</sup> The knocking-out of teeth is also interpreted as an attempt to imitate the totem.<sup>2</sup> A series of ceremonies at birth, puberty, marriage, and death are described, all performed with the object of achieving an "identification of a man with his totem."<sup>3</sup>

Passing now to the social aspect of totemism, Frazer notes that "all the members of a totem clan regard each other as kinsmen or brothers and sisters, and are bound to help and protect each other."<sup>4</sup> Finally, "persons of the same totem may not marry or have sexual intercourse with each other."<sup>5</sup>

Haddon's conception of totemism is, as he himself points out, in substantial agreement with that of Frazer. "Totemism," he says, "as Dr. Frazer and I understand it in its fully developed condition, implies the division of a people into several totem kins (or, as they are usually termed, totem clans), each of which has one or sometimes more than one totem. The totem is usually a species of animal, sometimes a species of plant, occasionally a natural object or phenomenon, very rarely a manufactured object. Totemism also involves the rules of exogamy, forbidding marriage within the kin, and necessitating inter-marriage between the kins. It is essentially connected with the matriarchal stage of culture (mother-right), though it passes over into the patriarchal stage (father-right). The totems are regarded as kinsfolk and protectors of the kinsmen, who respect them and abstain from killing and eating them. There is thus a recognition of mutual rights and obligations between the members of the kin and their totem. The totem is the crest and symbol of the kin."<sup>6</sup>

Rivers defines totemism in a somewhat more guarded but essentially similar way. He gives three basic characteristics of totemism: "The first and most important feature is that the class of animals or other objects are definitely connected with a social division, and in the typical form of the institution this social division is exogamous. Often

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>6</sup> A. C. Haddon, Presidential Address before Section H, Anthropology, of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1902.



the division takes its name from the totem, or this may be used as its badge or crest, but these points are less constant or essential. The second feature is the presence of a belief in kinship between the members of the social division and the totem, and in the most typical form there is belief in descent from the totem. The third feature is of a religious nature; in true totemism the members of the social division show respect to their totem, and by far the most usual method of showing this respect is the prohibition of the totem as an article of food. When these three features are present we can be confident that we have to do with totemism."<sup>1</sup>

Frazer, Haddon, and Rivers have time and again dealt with the subject of totemism in articles and reviews, and in the course of these writings they have repeatedly rejected one or another of the above features or "symptoms" of totemism as not constituting an indispensable phase of it. Frazer, especially, has in his later writings repudiated the original character of the connexion between totemism and exogamy<sup>2</sup> — an attitude shared by Spencer and Gillen<sup>3</sup> and Howitt.<sup>4</sup> On the whole, however, the above writers joined hands with Lang, Thomas,<sup>5</sup> and Hartland in regarding totemism with its several features as an integral phenomenon, both historically and psychologically. This attitude is reflected in the way various authors deal with the so-called "survivals" of totemism,<sup>6</sup> where from the presence in some region of one or two of the "symptoms" of totemism, or of the fragments of such symptoms, they infer the existence in the past of totemism in its "typical form" — that is, with all its essential characteristics.

The main features thus believed to be symptomatic of totemism may be summarized as follows:

1. An exogamous clan
2. A clan name derived from the totem

<sup>1</sup> In the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXIX (1909), pp. 156-7.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer: *Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. I, pp. 89-172.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXVIII (1899), pp. 276-7.

<sup>4</sup> Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> N. W. Thomas, however, in a review of Weule, says: "Dr. Weule has assumed that descent from the totem is a characteristic and necessary element in totemism, whereas it is in reality frequently absent and is in no sense a criterion" (*Folk-Lore*, Vol. XX, No. 2, 1909, p. 245). See also his book: *Kinship Organizations and Group Marriage in Australia*, where "totemism is . . . treated only incidentally" (Preface).

<sup>6</sup> See F. B. Jevons: *Introduction to the History of Religions*, pp. 113-29; Frazer: *Totemism*, pp. 92-9; Rivers, *loc. cit.*, pp. 156-7; as well as older writers, such as Robertson Smith: *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, pp. 186 sqq., and *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 83-131; John Ferguson McLennan, in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1869, pp. 562-82, and 1870, pp. 194-216.

3. A religious attitude towards the totem, as a friend, brother, protector, etc.
4. Taboos, or restrictions against the killing or eating (sometimes touching and seeing) of the totem
5. A belief in descent from the totem.<sup>1</sup>

The justification of regarding the various features of totemism as organically interrelated is not *a priori* obvious. An analysis of such features, as found among various primitive tribes, may demonstrate their essential independence of one another, historically or psychologically or both. We should then have to realize that any attempt at dealing with totemism without due realization of the essential independence of its constituent parts must result in grave misconceptions. In the following pages I shall attempt to analyse the "symptoms" of totemism on the basis, first, of a detailed comparison of two areas in which totemism is a conspicuous and recognized feature: Australia and the North-West Coast of North America. This will be followed by a somewhat different analysis of the same "symptoms" on the basis of a wider and more heterogeneous material.

The conclusions thus reached will lead us to reconsider the current conceptions of totemism and to apply the resulting methodological point of view to a critique of the theories advanced to account for the origin of totemism and of the attempts to represent totemism as a universal stage in the evolution of religion.

## 2

## AUSTRALIA AND THE NORTH-WEST COAST OF AMERICA

*Exogamy (Australia).*—The most constant feature in the social organization of Australian tribes is a division of the tribe into two exogamous halves — the phratries.<sup>2</sup> The character of totemic clans and

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<sup>1</sup> The attitude towards totemism taken by E. B. Tylor (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 138 sqq.) and some American students differs fundamentally from that expounded in the foregoing pages. We shall have occasion further on to return to the views of these authors.

<sup>2</sup> Howitt, as well as Spencer and Gillen, discard the term "phratry." Howitt uses "class" instead, Spencer and Gillen use "moiety"; the latter, however, also use "phratry." As the majority of the writers on Australia use this term when speaking of the two exogamous halves of a tribe, I shall adopt it with that meaning. "Class" and "subclass" will be used with the meaning given to these terms by Spencer and Gillen (II, p. 71, note). The terms "clan," "totem clan," or "totemic clan" will be used to designate the Australian totem group.

of the class organization varies with the groups of tribes; but the phratries remain, as a rule, well defined.<sup>1</sup> In some tribes the phratries assume some of the characteristics so marked in the phratries of the Siouan tribes of North America. Among the Arunta,<sup>2</sup> for instance, the dichotomous division is well marked in camping, some natural feature being generally selected as a boundary.<sup>3</sup> We shall see later what a prominent part the phratry plays in the exogamic regulations, and how closely the ceremonial life of the tribes is associated with it.

Let us now cover in a rapid review the various types of social organization found in Australia, taking as examples a few representative tribes.

The Dieri are divided into two exogamous phratries, Kararu and Matteri, each of which comprises a number of totemic clans, no totem occurring in both phratries. The mother's phratry and totem are inherited, although in case of marriage into another tribe the child belongs to the tribe of its father.<sup>4</sup>

Among the Urabunna the two phratries are called Kirarawa and Matthurie. Here the members of a Kirarawa totem group are restricted in their marital possibilities to one particular Matthurie totem, and vice versa. The mother's phratry and totem are inherited.<sup>5</sup>

In the group of tribes of which the Kamilaroi may be taken as representative, another feature supervenes. We again find the two exogamous phratries — Kupathin and Dilbi — each containing a number of totem clans. In addition, however, each phratry comprises two classes, while each class contains part of all the clans of one phratry. The Kupathin classes are Ipai (female, Ipata) and Kumbo (female, Buta); the Dilbi classes, Murri (female, Mota) and Kubbi (female, Kubbota).

In his recent publications on Australia (*Oceania*, Vol. I) A. R. Radcliffe-Brown has adopted, with good reason, an entirely different terminology. It would be confusing to introduce his terms here. His facts, I may add, are the same; the interpretation differs. We may therefore rest content in using the old facts and the old terms, as in the original essay. Full justice will be done to Radcliffe-Brown's somewhat striking findings *in re* Australia in my forthcoming *Introduction to Anthropology* (second edition of *Early Civilization*).

<sup>1</sup> Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 88; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 55. The statement does not apply to the tribes "with anomalous class systems and male descent" (Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 129), nor to the tribes "without class systems" (*ibid.*, p. 134). These two groups of tribes are not discussed in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Strehlow: *Die Aranda und Loritja-Stämme in Zentral-Australien*, Vol. I, Part 1. I shall use Spencer and Gillen's spelling. Cf., in this connexion, von Leonhardi's "*Vorwort*."

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 158 sqq. and 175 sqq.; Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, pp. 70 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 176 and 188-89; Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, pp. 70 sqq.

The class system introduces further marriage restrictions. A class of phratry Kupathin is debarred from marrying not only into the other class of the same phratry, but also into one of the classes of phratry Dilbi; and so on. Thus a Murri can marry only a Buta, a Kubbi only an Ipata, etc. The child follows the mother's phratry and totem, but belongs to the class which, together with the mother's class, forms her phratry.<sup>1</sup>

Essentially similar to the Kamilaroi in class system and concomitant marriage rules are the Kaiabara, with their phratries, Kubatine and Dilebi, containing two classes each;<sup>2</sup> but the rule of descent is different. The child belongs to the father's phratry and to the class which, together with the father's class, constitutes his phratry. The totem, however, follows the mother, with the additional peculiarity that while the child takes the same beast or bird as its mother, it is of a different colour or gender.<sup>3</sup>

In the tribes represented by the Warramunga, conditions are still more complex. Here each of the four classes contains in its turn two subclasses (with separate names for males and females), which affect marriage in the same way as do the four classes in the tribes represented by the Kamilaroi, Kaiabara, etc. Thus, each phratry is divided into four subclasses, each one of which can marry only into one subclass of the other phratry. Descent of the totem, phratry, and class is through the father; but the child belongs to the subclass which with the father's subclass constitutes his class.<sup>4</sup> Similar conditions prevail among the northern Arunta. In the southern section of that tribe, on the other hand, the system is, or seems to be, still more intricate. Here the four classes are not definitely subdivided into subclasses; but to each man of the Panunga class, for instance, the women of the Purula class are either Urawa, whom he may marry, or Unkulla, whom he may not.<sup>5</sup> Among the Arunta the totem clans are not strictly confined to either the one or the other phratry; and whenever a particular totem clan is found in both phratries, the clan tie is no longer a bar to marriage.<sup>6</sup>

It must be noted here that the phratry, class, and subclass organiza-

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<sup>1</sup> Howitt, op. cit., pp. 176, 188-9; Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 70 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 228 sqq.; cf., however, Lang on "The Puzzle of Kaiabara Sub-class Names" (*Man*, Vol. X, 1910, pp. 130-3).

<sup>4</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 100 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 97 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 73, 120 sqq.

tions in the various tribes must be regarded as equivalent. When a man finds himself in another tribe, he at once occupies a place in the social organization strictly analogous to his place in his own tribe, and the concomitant marriage restrictions follow as a matter of course.<sup>1</sup>

*Exogamy (North-West Coast).*—Let us now glance at the conditions in the American area.

Geographically the Tlingit comprise fourteen divisions, each consisting of several towns.<sup>2</sup> The present social division is into two strictly exogamous phratries, with descent through the mother. There is also a third division which is permitted to marry into both other divisions. The phratries are subdivided into clans the members of which regard themselves as more intimately related to each other than to members of other clans. Every geographical division contains members of both phratries, and usually of several clans of each phratry; while every clan is distributed between two or more geographical divisions.<sup>3</sup>

Among the Haida we again find two exogamous phratries,<sup>4</sup> descent being in the female line. The members of one phratry were regarded as closely related, and marriage between persons of the same phratry "was viewed by them almost as incest by us." Members of opposite phratries, on the contrary, were almost like enemies to each other. In case of internal strife, phratry ties were considered rather than individual family ties. As concerns relations to other tribes, a Haida Raven man is theoretically always affiliated with the Raven phratry of any particular tribe; here, however, a curious phenomenon supervenes which leads to instructive situations. The Haida phratries, namely, are transposed as compared with those of the Tsimshian. The crests of the Haida Raven phratry are found among the Bear and the Wolf phratries of the Tsimshian, while the crests of the Tsimshian Raven and Eagle phratries are those of the Haida Eagles.<sup>5</sup> The same relation obtains between the Haida and Tlingit phratries: the killer-whale, grizzly-bear, wolf, and halibut crests, which are on the Wolf side

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<sup>1</sup> Howitt, op. cit., pp. 137 sqq.; Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 100 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton: "Social Conditions, Beliefs, and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians," *26th Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (1904-5), pp. 396-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 398.

<sup>4</sup> Swanton's Haida "clans" are strictly analogous to the Tlingit phratries, and his Haida "families" to the Tlingit clans. In view of this I shall discard Swanton's Haida terminology and use the terms "phratry" and "clan" to designate the analogous divisions among the Tlingit and Haida.

<sup>5</sup> Swanton: "Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida," *Jesup Expedition*, Vol. V, p. 66.

among the Tlingit, are Raven crests among the Haida; while the raven, frog, hawk, and black-whale crests of the Haida Eagle phratry belong to the Raven side among the Tlingit.<sup>1</sup>

• On this occasion the relative importance of the phratric eponym, on the one hand, and of the clan crests, on the other, reveals itself. Crests are considered much more important than is the mere name of the phratry. A Haida, accordingly, considers that his affiliations are with the phratries which contain the crests of his own phratry, and calls such phratries his "friends."

The Haida may be divided into six geographical and historical groups, members of both phratries being represented in each group; and again, as among the Tlingit, the phratries comprise several clans which are similarly distributed geographically.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Tsimshian the "families" are differently distributed. Here they form local units; so that in each locality we find several families, all of the members of which belong to that particular local group. All the families are again classified according to the four phratries which claim their family or families in each locality. The phratries are exogamous, and descent is through the mother.<sup>3</sup>

The northern Kwakiutl are organized like the Tsimshian, with the exception of descent, which is no longer strictly maternal, although that form predominates. "Parents are at liberty to place their children in either the paternal or the maternal clan."<sup>4</sup>

When we proceed still farther south, we no longer find a number of clans represented in all the local groups of a tribe. The southern Kwakiutl are divided into clans and families, grouped in village communities, but each clan is restricted to one village.<sup>5</sup> The clans are not exogamous; here, in fact, a woman is advised to marry into her own clan, for among her own people she is likely to receive better treatment.<sup>6</sup> Paternal descent prevails among these people, although certain curious traces of maternal descent have also been observed, of which more is said further on.<sup>7</sup>

The Salish of the southern coast are divided into village communities. Some of these have amalgamated, for instance, among the

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<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit*, p. 423.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Boas: "Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians," *Jesup Expedition*, Vol. I, Part 2, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Personal communication by Boas.

<sup>7</sup> Boas: *Social Organization and Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians*, p. 334.

southern tribes of Vancouver Island, where we find a number of septs, each occupying a separate village.<sup>1</sup> The village communities are not exogamous.<sup>2</sup>

Thus we find exogamy in both totemic areas. Any attempt, however, to analyse this most general analogy reveals fundamental differences in the development and present significance of the social groups in the two regions.

In a large number of Australian tribes we noted a segmentation of the tribe into four or eight matrimonial classes. The classes are always exogamous; the regulation of marriage, in fact, being apparently their only function. On the North-West coast there are no such social divisions.

The clan of the Pacific coast is in its history as well as in its present functions a very different unit from the Australian totem clan. Traditions, partly supported by history, refer to a time when the clans of the Tlingit and Haida were local groups, each clan occupying one town or village. Subsequent migrations, separation of some groups, amalgamation of others, led to the present organization, where either several families occupy each village, being classified according to the clans or phratries, as among the Tsimshian and northern Kwakiutl, or the clans are dispersed throughout the geographical areas and towns, as among the Haida and Tlingit. The local sections of the Haida and Tlingit clans generally derive their names from the locality they originally occupied: "People of Ganax," "People of the island Teqo," "People of the house in the middle of the valley," etc. Thus a consciousness of common local descent is kept alive in the now dispersed groups.<sup>3</sup>

Among the coast tribes of this region the village community once constituted the unit of political and social organization, a condition still found among the tribes of Washington and Oregon,<sup>4</sup> as well as among the Salish of the interior.

In the present state of our knowledge, it would clearly be absurd to regard, as Frazer once did,<sup>5</sup> the clans of the Tlingit, for instance, as having originated from the Tlingit phratries through a process of

<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Bella Coola*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> The Lillooet, Shuswap, and Bella Coola, the social organizations of which tribes present highly interesting peculiarities, will be discussed below (see pp. 325 sqq.).

<sup>3</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit*, pp. 398-9; *Haida*, p. 68; Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 334.

<sup>4</sup> A. B. Lewis: *Tribes of the Columbia Valley and the Coast of Washington and Oregon*, p. 156.

<sup>5</sup> Frazer: *Totemism*, p. 62.

segmentation; even though we may not be in a position to fix chronologically the origin of the two institutions.

We are still sadly in the dark as to the history of the Australian totem clans. Cunow's argument notwithstanding,<sup>1</sup> they may well have originated as subdivisions of the phratry; positive evidence of the process, however, is not so far forthcoming. In regard to two points, nevertheless, we may be tolerably certain. The totem clans have not originated from village communities through a process of fusion and splitting, for it is more than improbable that a development of the required complexity and duration should have left no traces. The second point refers to the greater antiquity of the phratries as compared to the totem clans. The occurrence of the phratry over almost the whole of the Australian continent, the fact that many phratric names and the meaning of many more have been forgotten, the importance of the phratry in connexion with exogamy and the ceremonies — all these facts point towards a great antiquity for that institution. If there is a point of similarity between the Australian phratries and those of the Tlingit or Haida, it lies in the exogamic character of these social divisions.

As a functioning social unit, the Australian totem clan is conspicuously weak. Being in most cases exogamous only as part of the phratry,<sup>2</sup> it is important only in the ceremonies; but even here the functions of the phratry are of equal, often of greater, prominence. On the North-West coast, on the contrary, the local clan or family is *the* social unit. Being important in all the tribes, the clan reaches its maximum development among the Kwakiutl. Besides having its own territory, the clan is most intimately associated with particular traditions, songs, dances, ceremonies, potlatches, names of persons and objects, carvings; fishing- and burying-places and clover-gardens are owned by clans. The clan organization, moreover, has affected the character of the secret societies, and even that of the two shamanistic brotherhoods.<sup>3</sup>

If we add that the clans are all graded as to rank, and that within each clan the individuals are similarly graded — a feature totally foreign to Australia — the fundamental dissimilarity of these social units in the two areas becomes only too apparent. The only common

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<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Cunow: *Die Verwandtschafts-Organisationen der Australneger*, pp. 132-3.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 276 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Boas: "Der Einfluss der sozialen Gliederung der Kwakiutl auf deren Kultur," *International Congress of Americanists*, Vol. XIV (1904), pp. 141-8.



feature, in fact, is the negative one of what one might call "indirect exogamy," which obtains generally in Australia as well as among the northern tribes of the North-West coast.

*Totemic Names (North-West Coast).*—The two phratries of the Tlingit are named Raven and Wolf (in the north also Eagle);<sup>1</sup> those of the Haida, Raven and Eagle; the last, however, also bears the name of Gitina (perhaps derived from the Tsimshian *git*), which is not the name of an animal.<sup>2</sup> Two of the four Tsimshian phratries are called Wolf and Eagle; the other two bear names not derived from animals.<sup>3</sup> Among the northern Kwakiutl the clans have animal names,<sup>4</sup> while the clans and families of the Kwakiutl proper have no such names.<sup>5</sup> The clans of the Tlingit and Haida, finally, bear, with few exceptions, names derived from localities.<sup>6</sup>

*Totemic Names (Australia).*—In Australia all the clans derive their names from their animal, plant, or inanimate totems. The matrimonial classes do not, with possibly a few exceptions, bear animal or plant names. The names of phratries are in part forgotten, while the meaning of the majority of the names that survive is no longer remembered by the natives. A few of the names, however, seem to be derived from animals.<sup>7</sup>

Notwithstanding the occurrence of animal names for social groups in both areas, the analogy must be considered a very superficial one. The phratries of the Tlingit and Haida — social groups which roughly correspond to the Australian phratries — bear animal names; while

<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit*, p. 396.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> Boas: "The Tribes of the North Pacific Coast," *Annual Archaeological Report*, Toronto, 1906, p. 239.

<sup>4</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 328.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 329-32.

<sup>6</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit*, p. 398; *Haida*, p. 62.

<sup>7</sup> I shall not here attempt to discuss the problem of phratry and class names, to which Lang and Thomas have given considerable attention (Lang: *The Secret of the Totem*, pp. 154-70, 178-87; Thomas: *Kinship Organizations and Group Marriage in Australia*, pp. 42-92). Two points are worth mentioning, however. The similarity of phratry and class names over wide areas, embracing many tribes, makes it highly probable that extensive borrowing of such names has occurred in the past; and, in the second place, in considering the names of phratry and class as found today, we must always keep in mind the possibility that many of the ancient names belonging to languages no longer understood may have been reinterpreted as animal names by the natives whose daily experience tends to suggest such appellations for social groups. In view of the above considerations, extreme care must be exercised in drawing inferences from present conditions to the past history of the names or of the social groups that bear them. Cf. Lang (*Man*, Vol. X, 1910, pp. 133-4).

the evidence for the existence of such names among the Australian phratries is far from convincing.

The Australian clans, with their totemic names, find an analogy in the clans of the northern Kwakiutl; the clans and families of the Kwakiutl proper, on the other hand, as well as the clans of the Tlingit and Haida, bear no animal names. On the North-West coast, again, the groups with animal names are also the exogamous groups—excepting two of the Tsimshian phratries which are exogamous but have no animal names. In Australia, on the contrary, the social divisions which are the exogamous groups *par excellence*—the matrimonial classes—do not, with few doubtful exceptions, bear animal names.

If analysed still further, the dissimilarity of conditions in the two areas becomes striking. In Australia the social groups with totems invariably derive their names from them. If we take the American crests to correspond roughly to the Australian totems, the eponymous functions of the former appear to be more restricted and much less uniform. Here the principal crest animal is not always the eponymous animal. The principal crest of the Haida Ravens is the killer-whale; among the Eagles the beaver crest rivals the eagle in importance.<sup>1</sup> All the smaller subdivisions of the two northern tribes, as well as the families and clans of the southern Kwakiutl, have their crest animals, but do not derive their names from them; and the raven and bear crests of two of the Tsimshian phratries are also non-eponymous.

*Descent from the Totem (Australia).*—The Urabunna legends tell us of small companies of half-human, half-animal individuals of unknown origin who wandered about in the mythical period (*alcheringa*). They were possessed of superhuman power and became the ancestors of the totemic groups. A great carpet-snake individual gave rise to the Carpet-snake group, two jew-lizards gave rise to the Jew-lizard group, etc.<sup>2</sup> These individuals wandered about the country performing sacred ceremonies. At certain places they stopped and sank into the ground, whereupon a rock or pool arose to mark the spot. There also a number of spirit individuals (*mai-aurli*) came into being who became transformed into men and women—the first totemites.

The men and women of the Arunta *alcheringa* were incomplete

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Tribes of the North Pacific Coast*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 145-6.

creatures (*inapertwa*) of various shapes: "They had no distinct limbs or organs of sight, hearing, or smell, did not eat food, and presented the appearance of human beings all doubled up into a rounded mass, in which just the outline of the different parts of the body could be vaguely seen."<sup>1</sup> The magic-working *ungambikula* ("Out-of-nothing," "Self-existing") took hold of these creatures and by means of a complicated surgical operation shaped them into men and women. The *inapertwa* were really animals and plants in the process of transformation into men. They belonged to the totems derived from such animals and plants; and when they became human beings, each one of them was intimately associated with some particular animal or plant. The *inapertwa*, then, were the totemic ancestors.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Unmatjera and Kaitish some totemic ancestors originated from indefinitely shaped creatures which were changed into human beings by two Little-hawk boys.<sup>3</sup> Other ancestors were human beings from the start. They were also intimately associated with the animals whose names they bore, and were at first semi-human. They were men, however, and not incomplete human beings. Each ancestor had his class as well as his totem.

In the Warramunga tribe there was, in the case of most totems, only one mythical ancestor, half-human and half-beast or plant, who wandered about the country performing ceremonies at various spots and leaving behind him spirit children which emanated from his body.<sup>4</sup>

Of particular interest is the Warramunga tradition about a snake ancestor (later changed into a man) who, accompanied by a boy, travelled about the country continually changing his totems to other snake varieties. "Spirit children of the various totems came out of his muscles when he shook himself" <sup>5</sup> while performing sacred ceremonies at the *mungai* spots. Thus he became the ancestor of a number of different snake totem groups.

Among all the tribes farther north—the Umbaia, Gnanji, Binginga, Anula, and Mara—we find, as among the Warramunga, a belief in one eponymous ancestor who walked about the country fashioning natural features and performing sacred ceremonies. At each spot where a ceremony was performed, spirit children emanated from his body.

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 389.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.

*Descent from the Totem (North-West Coast).*—In a type of tradition common among the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, the ancestors of a clan or family come into more or less intimate contact with some animal which henceforth becomes the hereditary crest of the group. The Tlingit tradition about “the Beaver of Killisnoo”<sup>1</sup> may serve as an example:

“Some people belonging to the Decitan family captured a small Beaver, and as it was cunning and very clean, they kept it as a pet. By and by, however, although it was well cared for, it took offense at something and began to compose songs. Afterward one of the Beaver’s masters went through the woods to a certain salmon creek, and found two salmon spear-handles, beautifully worked, standing at the foot of a big tree. He carried these home; and, as soon as they were brought into the house, the Beaver said, ‘That is my make.’ Then something was said that offended it again. Upon this the Beaver began to sing just like a human being, and surprised the people very much. While it was doing this, it seized a spear and threw it straight through its master’s chest, killing him instantly. Then it threw its tail down upon the ground, and the earth on which that house stood dropped in. They found afterward that the Beaver had been digging out the earth under the camp, so as to make a great hollow. It is from this story that the Decitan claim the Beaver and have the Beaver hat; they also have songs composed by the Beaver.”

In traditions like the above, the concept of descent from the crest animal is obviously lacking. The human ancestors simply come into rather intimate contact with the animal, without, however, being in any way identified with it.

In another set of stories the identification of the ancestors with the crest animal becomes a more prominent feature. A Haida story narrates how the killer-whale first came to be used as a crest:

“Two brothers went hunting buffle-heads, and wounded one. Then they were invited under the sea, and entered the house of a killer-whale. There the oldest was transformed into a whale, like the others; but the youngest escaped. After he reached home again, his spirit was in the habit of going hunting with his elder brother, while his body remained in the house. In the morning his parents always found a black whale on the beach. One morning, however, the younger brother wept, declaring that his elder brother had been killed at Cape St. James, and

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<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit Myths*, p. 227.

he had brought his body home. Going outside, they found the body of a killer-whale, and they built a grave-house for it.”<sup>1</sup>

A slightly different psychological attitude is revealed in the Tlingit “Story of the Frog Crest of the Kiksadi of Wrangell” :

“A man belonging to the Stikine Kiksadi kicked a frog over on its back; but as soon as he had done so, he lay motionless, unable to talk, and they carried his body into the house. Meanwhile, his soul was taken by the frogs to their own town (arranged, by the way, exactly after the mode of human towns), where it was brought into the presence of chief Frightful-Face. The chief said to the man, ‘We belong to your clan, and it is a shame that you should treat your own people as you have done. We are Kiksadi, and it is a Kiksadi youth who has done this. You better go to your own village. You have disgraced yourself as well as us, for this woman belongs to your own clan.’ After this the man left Frog-Town, and at the same time his body at home came to. He told the people of his adventure. All the Kiksadi were listening to what this man said, and it is because the frog himself said he was a Kiksadi that they claim the frog.”<sup>2</sup>

No more than the Tlingit beaver tradition do the last two stories contain any elements which could be interpreted as a form of descent from the totem animal. The identification, however, of the ancestral individuals with the crest animals becomes in the two stories a rather marked feature; the frog tradition, in fact, approximates the idea of an association of a species of animals with a clan of men, which, according to many writers, lies at the root of totemism.<sup>3</sup>

A favourite motif in many traditions where the ancestor acquires the crest is the former’s marriage to the crest animal. In the Tlingit “Story of the Grizzly-bear Crest of the Teqoedi,” a hunter is caught in a bear’s den. He finds favour with the bear’s wife, whereupon the male bear leaves and the man marries the she-bear and has children by her. He is finally discovered by his younger brother, whom, however, he persuades to withdraw. “Stand right there! Don’t do any harm. I am here. Although I am with this wild animal, I am living well. Don’t worry about me any more.” When he was first taken into this den, it looked like a den and nothing more; but that night he thought that he was in a fine house, with people all about eating supper, and his wife looked to him like a human being. Later he returns

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<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit Myths*, p. 232.

<sup>3</sup> See Tylor in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 144.

to his village; but he keeps away from his human wife and spends his time hunting, at which he is very successful. During one of the hunts he meets his bear children, to whom he gives the seals he has killed. Henceforth he feeds them regularly. His human wife overtakes him and protests against his feeding cubs instead of her little ones. He submits and begins to feed her children. "Presently he went hunting again, and again took some seals to his cubs. As he was going toward them, he noticed that they did not act the same as usual. They lay flat on the ground with their ears erect. Then he landed; but when he got near them, they killed him. It is on account of this story that the Teqoedi claim the grizzly bear."<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, a human ancestor has children by a woman, but also cubs by his bear wife. Although the bear nature of one of their ancestors is very pronounced, the Teqoedi do not believe themselves to be the descendants of the cubs. This type of legend is very prevalent. The people of the Kwakiutl clan Gexsem, who claim the Qomoqoa as their crest, believe themselves to be the actual descendants of Aikayolisana, Qomoqoa's son, and Hataqa, the daughter of Raven. Qomoqoa, however, is not an animal, but a supernatural being: as the spirit of the sea, she protects seals and kills hunters.<sup>2</sup>

Still another type of clan tradition is found among the Kwakiutl. Here the crest animal comes to earth and becomes a man, ancestor of the clan. "A bird was sitting on the beach of Tengis," says the Omaxtalale tradition of one of the Kwakiutl clans. "He took off his mask, and then his name was Nemogwis. He became a man. Then he moved to Kaqa. He had a son, whom he named Omaxtalale. The child grew up fast; he became a real man."<sup>3</sup> In another Kwakiutl tradition "Sent-lae, the Sun, came down to earth in the shape of a bird, became a man, and built a house in Yiqamen. From there he went to Qomoks, visited the Tlauitsis, the Nemkic, the Naqoartok, and finally reached Tliksiuae in the land of the Kwakiutl, where he settled down in Qaiog. He took a wife from each tribe, and his clan bears the name Sisintle. He decided to remain in Tliksiuae, and married a woman belonging to the Kwakiutl tribe. He had a son by her, whose name was Tsqtsqalis."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit Myths*, pp. 228-9.

<sup>2</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 382.

<sup>4</sup> Boas: *Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pazifischen Küste Amerikas*, p. 166. To obviate unnecessary confusion on the part of the reader, the phonetic spelling of the native names in these traditions, as elsewhere in this essay, has been replaced by the approximate English equivalents. Those interested in the more accurate spelling will find it by consulting the original sources.

"The Thunder-Bird was living in the upper world with his wife; and the name of the Thunder-Bird was Too-Large," relates the Head Winter Dancer legend of a Kwakiutl clan. Too-Large and his wife decided to go to the lower world. "Then he put on his thunder-bird mask, and his wife also put on her thunder-bird mask. They came flying through the door of the upper world." Here they saw a man at work upon his (future) house, who said: "O friends! I wish you would become men, that you may come and help me make this house." Too-Large lifted at once the jaw of his thunder-bird mask and said: "O brother! we are people," etc.<sup>1</sup>

In all these legends the central feature is human descent; but the ancestor is first an animal, then becomes a man by taking off his animal mask. Now, this last feature must clearly be attributed to the suggestion of the dances of the secret societies (note particularly the mode of becoming a man: "Too-Large lifted at once the jaw of his thunder-bird mask . . .").<sup>2</sup>

The last three legends could, of course, be formally interpreted as containing the concept of descent from the crest animal.<sup>3</sup> Such an interpretation, however, would but imperfectly represent the actual conditions. Traditional as well as historical evidence leaves scarcely any room for doubt that human descent is an ancient feature throughout the entire area under consideration. We still find it clearly expressed in all the clan and family legends; but here it has undergone various transformations under the influence of the guardian-spirit idea in its many forms and embodiments, including the secret societies and the family and clan crests.

In the Tlingit beaver tradition the association of the ancestors with the crest animal is a very superficial one. In the Haida killer-whale and the Tlingit frog traditions the intimacy of the association becomes very considerable. In the Tlingit grizzly-bear story and the many similar traditions of the Haida, Tsimshian, and Kwakiutl the association becomes to a degree an identification through the marriage of the ancestor to the crest animal. In all these legends, however, the acquisi-

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<sup>1</sup> Boas and Hunt: "Kwakiutl Texts," *Jesup Expedition*, Vol. III, pp. 165-6.

<sup>2</sup> A derivation in the opposite direction would obviously be out of court, as animal guardians and secret societies are of much older standing in this area than the clan organization with its concomitant traditions (see Boas: *Kwakiutl*, pp. 661-3, where attention is also drawn to the great variability of traditions accounting for the origin of the same ceremonial, as indicative of the more recent character of the former).

<sup>3</sup> See Hartland: "Totemism and Some Recent Discoveries; Presidential Address," *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XI (1900), p. 61; and Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, p. 211.

tion of the crest does not mark the origin of the exogamic group, the ancestral individuals being in existence before the acquisition of the crest. In the last-quoted Kwakiutl legends, finally, the ancestor actually becomes the crest animal transformed, the concept thus originated bearing all *prima facie* evidence of being a variant of the descent-from-the-totem motif.<sup>1</sup>

Summarizing briefly, we may say that the concept of totemic descent, as an integral part of the totemic system, is absent on the North-West coast; but here the interaction of two distinct concepts—human descent and guardian spirit—resulted in curious modifications of the human-descent idea, some of which approximate rather closely to the animal-descent concept in the form universal in Australia.

*Taboo (Australia).*—In Australia taboo plays a prominent part in the totemic system, assuming many different aspects. Among the Urabunna the totem animal must not be eaten; it may be killed, however, and handed over to members of other totems to be eaten by them.<sup>2</sup> Among the Arunta the totemites are not absolutely debarred from eating their totem animal, but they eat of it sparingly. At the performance of the *intichiuma* ceremony, however, the headman must eat of the totem animal.<sup>3</sup> Among the Unmatjera and Kaitish the totemites may not eat their totem, while members of other totems may eat it, but not without permission of a member of the particular totem.<sup>4</sup>

A man may himself shrink from killing his totem animal; he will, however, assist others to do so, as in the case of the euro man who gave a euro churinga to a plum-tree man to assist the latter in his chase for euro.<sup>5</sup> There is considerable variability between the totems in regard to this point. Sometimes a man may kill his totem, but in doing so he must proceed humanely: a kangaroo man must not brutally attack the kangaroo “so that the blood gushes out,” but is only

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<sup>1</sup> A striking development of a similar character has occurred among the Lillooet. There the entire clan and totemic organization is clearly borrowed from the coast tribes, the original socio-political unit having been the village community in which all members traced their descent from a common human ancestor. During the process of adopting a totemic clan system the clan crest became identified with the human ancestor, whereupon the clansmen proceeded to trace their descent from the crest animal. A good example of historical complexity—in disguise! (see pp. 326 sqq).

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 167–8.

<sup>4</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 159–60.

<sup>5</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 202.



permitted to hit it on the neck. Having thus killed the animal, he may eat its head, feet, and liver; the rest he must leave to his friends. The emu man must exercise similar caution. A man belonging to a specific fish totem may eat only a few fishes of that species; but if the fish stink, he may eat of them to his heart's content. The wild-turkey man, on the other hand, may kill his totem, but the eating of any part of it is forbidden to him. The same applies to the eagle man. The mosquito man, finally, may neither kill nor eat the insects. A water (or rain) man must be moderate in his use of water; should it rain, however, he is not permitted to hide himself in his hut, but must stand in the open, with no other protection over his head than his shield.<sup>1</sup>

In the Warramunga group a man may neither kill nor eat his totem animal; the same prohibition, however, applies also to the totems of his father and his father's father, whether the latter are identical with his own, as they usually are, or differ from it. As to the mother's totem, it is also subject to restrictions which vary in the different tribes.<sup>2</sup>

A variety of other regulations, only partly or not at all associated with totemism, are plentiful. Some food-prohibitions embrace much wider groups than a single totemic community. Thus the wildcat is taboo to all Arunta,<sup>3</sup> while the prohibition against the eating of the brown hawk applies to a still larger number of tribes.<sup>4</sup> Or the prohibition applies only to the most valued parts of an animal: an emu man will eat his totem, but he is careful not to eat the best part of it, such as the fat.<sup>5</sup> Among the Anula and Mara tribes the full-grown totem animal is (usually) taboo, but they will eat a half-grown one or just a little of a full-grown one.<sup>6</sup> Other prohibitions are associated with particular periods in life. A youth, after having been circumcised and until he has recovered from the ceremony of sub-incision, is forbidden to eat the flesh of snakes, opossums, echidna, and other animals.<sup>7</sup> The list of foods prohibited to the boy before circumcision is very long, and the consequences supposed to ensue when such prohibitions are violated are as varied as they are fanciful. He may not eat a kangaroo-

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<sup>1</sup> Strehlow: *Die Aranda und Loritja*, Vol. I, Part 2, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 167-8.

<sup>4</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 612.

<sup>5</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 202.

<sup>6</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 173.

<sup>7</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 470.

tail (penalty: premature age and decay), a female bandicoot (probable penalty: bleed to death at circumcision), all kinds of parrots and cockatoos (penalty: development of a hollow on the top of the head), etc.<sup>1</sup>

A pregnant woman and her husband (in some tribes) are forbidden to eat certain animals.<sup>2</sup> Some animals seem to be restricted to the use of those above a certain age: "A man is usually well on in middle age before he is allowed to eat such things as wild-turkey, rabbit-bandicoot, and emu."<sup>3</sup> The old men, on the other hand, are generally exempt from all taboos, even (among the Arunta) from that of the achilpa, but that only when they are very old and "their hair is turning white."<sup>4</sup>

Thus it appears that in Australia the phenomenon of taboo, although by no means coextensive with totemism, is yet intimately associated with it. A great many food-restrictions have nothing whatever to do with the totemic animals, but as great a variety of prohibitions have become part of the totemic system. The striking feature is the great variability of the restrictions. This should discourage any attempt to correlate the taboo directly with any attitude towards the totem as towards a brother, friend, or protector, who should be treated with respect and must not be killed or eaten. The fact remains, however, that taboos of one form or another are found in conjunction with practically all totems.

*Taboo (North-West Coast and Proximate Regions).*—Among the Thompson River Indians a pregnant woman was not allowed to eat or even touch porcupine flesh or to eat anything killed by a hawk or eagle. If she ate the flesh of the bear, the child would have a hare-lip. The lynx and dog were interdicted on account of the part played by these animals in mythological traditions. Anything her husband was forbidden to eat she also had to abstain from. The flesh of the black bear was also forbidden to her. She must not eat food of which a mouse, a rat, or a dog had eaten a part; for if she did, she would have a premature birth. If pregnant for the first time, she must not eat salmon-heads or touch salmon.<sup>5</sup> The husband of a pregnant woman

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 471.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 614.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 612.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 167-8.

<sup>5</sup> Teit: "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia," *Jesup Expedition*, Vol. I, p. 303.

is also limited in his choice of food. He must not eat or hunt the black or grizzly bear, else the child would dissolve or cease to exist in the mother's womb or would be still-born, etc. Among the Lillooet Indians, on the other hand, the pregnant woman and her husband could eat anything, "even the hare and porcupine."<sup>1</sup> Only the mysterious parts of animals were forbidden to them.<sup>2</sup>

After the birth of a child the father must not eat or touch the flesh of any animal for at least a day after it had been killed; his wife must not eat any fresh meat for from six months to one year after the birth of her child.<sup>3</sup>

Among the Shuswap, a pregnant woman must not touch or look at a black bear, nor may she pass near a black bear that has been killed. She must not partake of any bird, mammal, or fish (except salmon) unless at least a day old.<sup>4</sup>

Among the Haida, a pregnant woman was not permitted to eat cormorant, abalone, and other animals. If she ate the former, the child would defecate all the time; if the latter, it would have its neck turned round.<sup>5</sup>

Other restrictions refer to the menstruating period of a woman. Among the Lillooet, a woman in that condition was not allowed to eat the head, feet, or any part of the inside of a deer or other large game.<sup>6</sup> A Shuswap woman was, under the same circumstances, prohibited from eating any fresh meat but that of the female mountain-sheep. Women at no time ate the head parts of any animals; and but few men ate them, unless they were shamans.<sup>7</sup> A Shuswap lad when training did not eat any fat, "for it would make him heavy, make it difficult to vomit, and stop him from dreaming"; nor could he eat any fresh fish, except the tail parts.<sup>8</sup>

Among the Kwakiutl as well as the Tsimshian, twins stand in special relations to the salmon. They consider twins transformed

<sup>1</sup> Teit: "The Lillooet," *Jesup Expedition*, Vol. II, Part 5, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Certain parts of animals, called "mysterious," were eaten only by old men. Others, when eating them, would become sick. Hunters cut them out, pierced them with a stick, and placed them on the branch of a tree. The parts of greatest mysterious power were the "paint" or "paint-bag" piece of the ham near the thigh; the *skikiks*, a piece of the flesh of the front leg; and the "apron," the fleshy part of the belly extending down to between the hind legs. The head, feet, heart, kidneys, and other portions of the inside were mysterious to a less marked degree (*ibid.*, p. 280).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 260-1.

<sup>4</sup> Teit: "The Shuswap," *Jesup Expedition*, Vol. II, Part 7, p. 584.

<sup>5</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 47.

<sup>6</sup> Teit: *Lillooet*, p. 269.

<sup>7</sup> Teit: *The Shuswap*, p. 592.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 559.

salmon; and, as children of salmon, they are guarded against going near the water, since it is believed they will be retransformed into salmon. Their mother's marks are considered scars of wounds which they received when they were struck by a harpoon while still having the shape of salmon.<sup>1</sup> On the coast there is a belief that hunters will become killer-whales; accordingly, they do not hunt these animals. The wolf, dog, and panther must not be killed among the Kwakiutl, else the other animals will be afraid and will evade the hunters. If a man has killed a wolf, he must go to the body and nod his head several times, apologizing that he did not know it was a wolf's path when laying the trap. He must cry and express his regret at having killed a wolf. He asks the wolf to tell his relatives that he has been killed by mistake. Then the wolf's heart, fat, and intestines are buried in a hole.<sup>2</sup>

The Kwakiutl do not eat deer, because that would make them forgetful. A man must purify himself and abstain from food when he chops a tree for his house, else the latter will turn out rotten.<sup>3</sup> Among the Nootka, chiefs alone are allowed to hunt whales and to act as harpooners.<sup>4</sup> Among the Kwakiutl, men who catch geese are not allowed to eat herring-eggs, because this will cause the geese to scatter; nor may they eat rock-cod which causes the fire to be red and smoky, so that they cannot see what they are looking for. Sea-eggs and tallow are also forbidden to them, for these will cause their faces to become white and easily visible to the birds. Every Kwakiutl has an owl which is his soul; so owls must not be killed, for when an owl is killed, a person is killed.<sup>5</sup>

We see that food- and killing-restrictions are many and manifold on the North-West coast and, as a whole, are strictly comparable to the analogous customs in Australia. In the latter area, however, taboos are also found in intimate and inextricable association with totemism; so much so that, as indicated above, the totemic taboo came to be recognized as one of the essential traits of totemism. Thus, when the curious conditions among the tribes of central Australia came to light, where the totem animal may in some tribes be eaten of sparingly and on certain occasions *must* be eaten, the case was

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<sup>1</sup> Boas, *British Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol. LIX, 5th Report, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Boas, unpublished material.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Boas, in *British Association*, etc., Vol. LX, 6th Report, p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> Boas, unpublished material.

pronounced highly anomalous and proved a strong stimulus to interpretative theories.

In the North-West, on the contrary, we fail to find any taboos in association with totemism. The living representatives of eponymous species, while figuring prominently in myths, traditions, and carvings, are not otherwise differentiated by the natives from non-totemic animals; they may be seen, touched, killed, and eaten without the least danger of resentment on the part of natural or supernatural agencies; and if a killing- or eating-prohibition happens to attach itself to such an animal, it is taboo on a par with other interdicted animals, not as a living representative of the crest.

A possible criticism must be met here. True enough, taboo does not figure in the totemism of the North-West; but are we here dealing with a primitive condition? Is not totemism among these Indians caught at a very late stage of development? The totem has become attenuated to a crest, to a symbol; the living, flesh-and-blood relationship with the totem animal has been transferred to the realm of mythology; and, naturally enough, the taboo on the totem animal has dwindled away and finally disappeared. In view of the general failure of evolutionary reconstructions, a situation of this sort, while possible in the abstract, cannot be assumed without confirmatory evidence. Such evidence is not forthcoming. No traces of totemic taboos have been discovered in the North-West. Such being the case, the burden of proof rests with those who may choose to postulate transformations like the above.

If we were guided by the traditional "symptoms" of totemism, our comparison might end here. We have passed in review exogamy, totemic names, and the religious or quasi-religious attitude towards the totem as reflected in totemic descent and taboos. But to anyone at all acquainted with totemistic discussion in the past, the presentation so far given of the totemic phenomena in Australia and north-west America will appear sorely incomplete. What of the *intichiuma* ceremonies and the belief in reincarnation about which so much has been written? What of the totemic art of the coast Indians and the belief in guardian spirits which students have learned to identify with that area? Obviously, we must now turn to these phenomena in an attempt to ascertain their position with reference to totemism as represented by its classic "symptoms."

*Magical Ceremonies (Australia).*—Among the Arunta, the main part of the *intichiuma* ceremonies consists in a series of magical rites

supposed to further the increase of the totem animal. The chief elements of the kangaroo totem *intichiuma*, for instance, are a stone-rubbing ceremony, the decoration of the rock ledge, and a blood-letting rite. In this instance, one of the two stones is supposed to represent an "old-man" kangaroo, the other a female. The former is rubbed with a stone by the Purula men, the latter by the Bulthara men (Purula and Bulthara are class names).

In the decoration of the rock ledge, red ochre and powdered gypsum are used; with these, alternate vertical lines are painted on the face of the rock, each about a foot in width, the painting of the left side being done by the Panunga and Bulthara men, that of the right by the Purula and Kumara.<sup>1</sup> The red stripes are the red fur, the white ones, the bones of the kangaroo. In the blood-letting ceremony which follows, the Panunga and Bulthara men sit down at the left side, while the Purula and Kumara sit at the right. They open veins in their arms and allow the blood to spurt out over the edge of the ceremonial stone on the top of which they are seated. While this is taking place, the men below sit still, watching the performers and singing chants referring to the increase in the number of kangaroos which the ceremony is supposed to ensure.<sup>2</sup> The ceremony is performed at a spot where in the *alcheringa* many kangaroo animals sank into the ground, an increase in the supply of kangaroos being achieved "by means of pouring out the blood of kangaroo men upon the rock, to drive out in all directions the spirits of the kangaroo animals."<sup>3</sup>

Every totem group has its own *intichiuma* ceremony, performed at a time specified by the headman of the group who is in charge of the ceremony. All men belonging to the particular totem are allowed to be present; sometimes men of other totems but of the same moiety, who happen to be in camp, are invited to witness the ceremony, but men of the opposite moiety are excluded. In the course of an *intichiuma*, the performers usually follow, at least in part, the path over which the ancestral animals in the *alcheringa* once travelled.<sup>4</sup>

The churinga play an important part in the Arunta ceremonies. At

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Strehlow endorses Spencer and Gillen's view as to the general purpose of the *intichiuma* ceremonies. He holds, however, that the natives do not have this purpose in mind when performing a ceremony, but simply follow the precedent of their fathers and fathers' fathers. He admits, nevertheless, that they are well aware of the fact that an increased food-supply will be the inevitable outcome of the ceremony (Strehlow: *Die Aranda und Loritja*, Part 2, p. 59, note).

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

one stage, for instance, of the witchetty grub *intichiuma* the headman and his associates arrive at a spot where Intwuliuka, the great leader of the witchetty grubs in the *alcheringa*, used to stand; up the face of the rock he threw a number of churinga, which rolled down again to his feet. The headman, accordingly, does the same with some of the churinga brought from the storehouse close by. While he is doing this, the other members of the party run up and down the face of the rocky ledge, singing all the while. The churinga roll down to the bed of the creek. Later they are carefully gathered up and replaced in the store.<sup>1</sup>

I had occasion before to refer to the relative mildness of the totemic taboo among the Arunta; during the *intichiuma* performances, in fact, the headman is expected to eat a little of the totem animal, else the ceremony would fail of effect.

Among the Kaitish, Unmatjera, and Worgaia a ceremony having reference to some incident in the *alcheringa* history of the totemic group<sup>2</sup> is performed by the headman as part of the *intichiuma* ceremony. Here the preparations for the ceremony, including the decoration of the performers, are not made by the totemites themselves but by members of the other moiety of the tribe. Among these tribes the churingas continue to be an important factor in the ceremonies.<sup>3</sup> The totemites have the power to increase the supply of the totem, but they make use of it for the benefit of the other totem groups; for they eat very little of their own totem except during the *intichiuma* ceremony, when, as among the Arunta, the headman must eat a little of the totem animal. After the ceremony he gives permission to the members of the other moiety to eat freely of his totem. If he or any other man eats too much of his own totem, he will, so say the natives, be "boned" (that is, killed by a charmed bone) by men of the other moiety. The reason given for this is that by eating too freely of his totem he weakens his power of performing the *intichiuma* and thus increasing the supply of the totem animal.

Among the Warramunga, as well as the Walpari, Wulmala, Tjingilli, and Umbaia, the *intichiuma* is performed by members of a totem group, but only at the invitation of the other moiety. All the preparations for the *intichiuma* are made by that other moiety, but during the performance no persons but the performers themselves are permitted to be present.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 172-3.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 293.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 298.

In all these tribes the churingas are practically absent from the *intichiuma*. The sacred churinga rituals which are so important in the *intichiuma* of the Arunta and Ilpirra and predominate in those of the Kaitish, Unmatjera, and Worgaia, completely disappear among the Warramunga. Here their place is taken by the performance of a complete series of ceremonies representing the *alcheringa* history of the totemic ancestor.<sup>1</sup>

Spencer and Gillen witnessed almost a complete cycle of these ceremonies, which started on July 26. When, on September 18, our investigators left the tribe, the cycle was not yet completed, although more than eighty totemic ceremonies had been performed.<sup>2</sup> During these ceremonies the performers follow in the footsteps, as it were, of their *alcheringa* ancestor; they move from rock ledge to rock ledge, from water-hole to water-hole, performing at these spots the same ceremonies he had performed and enacting all the while the incidents which enlivened his varied career. The characteristic single feature of all such ceremonies is the shaking of the body, "done in imitation of the old ancestor who is reported to have always shaken himself when he performed sacred ceremonies. The spirit individuals used to emanate from him just as the white down flies off from the bodies of the performers at the present day when they shake themselves."<sup>3</sup>

The totemites, as well as members of the entire moiety to which a totem belongs, are strictly forbidden to eat it. They may kill it, however, and hand it over to men of the other moiety. "If the men of the totem should eat it, the belief is that it would cause their death, and at the same time prevent the animal from multiplying."<sup>4</sup>

When, after a performance of, say, the carpet-snake *intichiuma*, the snakes appear about the camp, the men of the other moiety go out and bring one to the Carpet-snake headman, saying: "Do you want to eat this?" He replies: "No, I have made it for you; suppose I were to eat it, then it might go away; all of you go and eat it."<sup>5</sup> This, with considerable variations, is the typical procedure at the end of the *intichiuma*.

Our rapid survey has, I think, made it clear that the *intichiuma* ceremonies have become part and parcel of the totemic life of the tribes of central Australia; indeed, that they have become *the* ceremonial expression of that life. In the performances at the ceremonies the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 298-9.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 309.



functions of the phratries rival in importance those of the totem groups, while the peculiar variability of the totemic taboo among these tribes is obviously conditioned by its relation to the *intichiuma* rituals.

*Magical Ceremonies (North-West Coast and Proximate Regions).*

— Ceremonies intended to ensure the supply of food are by no means foreign to the cultures of the North-west Indians. Here we usually find the element of propitiation rather strongly emphasized. When Lillooet hunters killed a bear, they sang a mourning song to the dead animal, about as follows: " You died first, greatest of animals. We respect you, and will treat you accordingly. No woman shall eat your flesh; no dogs shall insult you. May the lesser animals all follow you, and die by our traps, snares, and arrows! May we now kill much game, and may the goods of those we gamble with follow us, and come into our possession! May the goods of those we play lehal with become completely ours, even as an animal slain by us! " <sup>1</sup> The head of the slain animal was raised on the top of a pole, hung to the branch of a tree, or thrown into the water. Thus the bears would be satisfied, would not take revenge on the hunters, nor send them ill luck.

The Lower Lillooet believed that the first salmon of the season had to be treated properly if the runs were to be good. Ceremonies with that end in view were performed at all fishing-stations, under the supervision of the clan chief. When the first salmon was sighted, the chief summoned a boy and sent him to all the fishing-places and to all the streams the salmon were known to ascend, bidding him to pray for a heavy run. The boy prayed to the salmon, and he also prayed to the streams and fishing-places. Just before the people were ready to catch the first salmon, the tops of the poles of weirs were decorated with feathers of the owl, hawk, red-winged flicker, and eagle. After the salmon was caught, but before it was taken from the water, it was rolled up in a bag or mat; " for, if it should see the ground, no more salmon would come. " <sup>2</sup> All the objects used in the cooking and preparation of the salmon were new, never used before, and carefully guarded from contact with possible polluting influences. No unmarried adult woman, menstruating woman, orphan, widow, or widower was allowed to eat of the first salmon. If they did, the run would be poor. All the other people must eat of the salmon-mush, men out of one dish,

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<sup>1</sup> Teit: *Lillooet*, p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

women out of another. The brew was drunk. If the first salmon was cut with a knife, said the people, there would be no run.<sup>1</sup>

Other ceremonies were associated with mysterious powers ascribed to animals. Certain animals could control the weather: the coyote and hare, the cold; the mountain-goat, snow; the beaver, rain. If for any reason the people desired cold weather, snow, or rain, they burned the skin of the animal having control of the desired weather, and prayed to it.<sup>2</sup> When, on the contrary, they were anxious to avoid certain kinds of weather, they took good care that no part of the skin of the particular animal should come near a fire.<sup>3</sup>

In the last-mentioned ceremonies the magical element predominates, thus strengthening the analogy with the Australian *intichiuma*. Other ceremonies referred to the first berries of the season. When the berries were ripe, the chiefs summoned all the people and announced that the time for picking berries had arrived. When the men, women, and children, who had meanwhile painted their faces and other exposed parts of their bodies red, were seated, "the chief took a birch-bark tray containing some of the various kinds of ripe berries. Walking forward, he held the tray up towards the highest mountain in sight, saying, 'Qailus, we tell you we are going to eat fruit. Mountains, we tell you we are going to eat fruit.' After addressing each of the mountain-tops in this manner, he made a round of the people, following the sun's course, giving each a berry to eat. After this the people dispersed, and the women proceeded to pick berries. That day they gathered not more than could be eaten the same night. If they gathered more than this, they would afterwards be unlucky in procuring roots or berries."<sup>4</sup>

Among the Salish of the interior, when the run of salmon began, the first caught was brought to the chief, who gathered the people for prayer and dancing. Only the chief prayed, never uttering any words aloud, the others meanwhile keeping their eyes closed. This last detail was among the Salish an essential feature of the act, the non-observance of which always caused failure. Towards the end of the ceremony the salmon was cooked, and a small piece of it given to each person present.<sup>5</sup> Similar ceremonies were performed with the young succulent suckers of the wild raspberry, and later in summer with the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Hill-Tout: "Report on the Ethnology of the Siciatl of British Columbia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXIV (1904), p. 330.

ripe berries of the plant. Many similar ceremonies were performed by the Thompson River Indians in connexion with berry- or tobacco-gathering and hunting expeditions,<sup>1</sup> and first-salmon ceremonies are also a familiar feature among the tribes of the coast.

Among the Haida, hunters had their own rules. Before going out they ate certain plants, and it was very important to "count the nights." After a certain number of these had passed, they bathed early in the morning and started out the next fine weather. Sometimes they put black marks on their faces, or chewed tobacco, or put feathers upon their heads. These hunting-rules descended from uncle to nephew, or also from father to son.<sup>2</sup> In connexion with fishing, the Haida had evidently reached the prosaic insight into the magical power of well-directed effort, for "there were some secret regulations used by the old men to bring success in fishing; but it was feared that, if young men began to use them, they would make poor fishermen all their lives."<sup>3</sup>

The Tsimshian perform ceremonies when the first olachen are caught. "They are roasted on an instrument of elderberry-wood. . . . The man who roasts the fish on this instrument must wear his travelling-attire, — mittens, cape, etc. While it is roasted, they pray for plenty of fish, and ask that they might come to their fishing-ground. . . . The fire must not be blown up. In eating the fish, they must not cool it by blowing, nor break a single bone. Everything must be kept neat and clean. . . . The first fish that they give as a present to their neighbors must be covered with a new mat. When the fish become more plentiful, they are doubled up, and roasted on the point of a stick. After that they are treated without any further ceremonies."<sup>4</sup>

Among the Kwakiutl the first female land-otter of the season is treated ceremoniously. They place it on a skinning-mat and move the knife from the mouth down along the lower side of the animal, without cutting, however. In doing so they draw in their breath. This is repeated three times; at the fourth time they cut. Then the skin is cut off, and the body is put down on its stomach. Then the skin is thrown on it with the words: "Now call your husband!" The skin is lifted,

<sup>1</sup> Teit: *The Thompson River Indians*, pp. 346, 350 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 57. These hunting-rules of the Haida are interesting as, perhaps, illustrating one way in which magical practices to promote the chase or increase the food-supply may have developed. As such rules are transmitted from generation to generation, they tend to become stable, and in due time categorical. A breach of the rules may thus come to carry with it the danger of failure (as is, indeed, often the case); and the strict observance of the rules, meanwhile stereotyped as rituals, may acquire a direct magical significance.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Boas: *British Association*, etc., Vol. LIX, 5th Report, p. 51.

turned round, and thrown on again, with the words: "Now call your uncles!" The process is repeated again and again, the land-otter being asked to call its fathers, children, and tribe. Then the body is hung up in a corner of the house. Similar ceremonies are performed with beavers, racoons, and martens. When a bear is killed, it is treated in much the same way and then eaten; or a loop is put through its nose, and the body is then hung up in a corner of the house.<sup>1</sup>

Magical ceremonies intended to preserve or increase the food-supply are thus seen to be a familiar and important feature in the cultures of the coast and neighbouring interior. By contrast with Australia, however, these ceremonies have here no reference whatever to totemic animals: they stand apart from all totemistic beliefs and practices.

*Reincarnation of Ancestral Spirits (Australia).*—Each of the *alcheringa* ancestors (Arunta) is represented as carrying with him one or more churingas, each one of which was associated with the spirit of some person. At the spots where the ancestors originated and stayed, or at the camping-places where they stopped during their wanderings, local totem centres (*oknanikilla*) arose; for at such spots a number of the ancestors sank into the ground with their churingas. Their bodies died,<sup>2</sup> but some natural feature arose to mark the spot, while the spirit remained in the churinga. Other churingas were placed in the ground, a tree or rock arising at the spot. Thus the entire country over which the *alcheringa* ancestors travelled is dotted with totem centres at which a number of churingas associated with spirit individuals are deposited.

The Arunta believe that another spirit being issues from the *nanja* (the sacred tree, rock, or what not, at the *oknanikilla*). This spirit being watches over the ancestral spirit which abides in the churinga.<sup>3</sup> In the myths of the Unmatjera and Kaitish the incident of ancestral groups leaving behind spirit individuals is not so common; here the ancestors, often two in number, carry with them stores of churingas which they deposit in the ground; thus totem centres arise.<sup>4</sup> Similar cases occur among the Worgaia. Among the tribes farther north, however, beginning with the Warramunga, the association of ancestors

<sup>1</sup> Boas, unpublished material.

<sup>2</sup> According to Strehlow (*Aranda und Loritja*, Part 2, p. 52), the rocks, trees, water-holes, found at such places are the transformed bodies of the ancestors.

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 513.

<sup>4</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 273.

with churingas is rare. The chameleonic ancestor of several of the Warramunga snake totems had no churinga of his own, "but he stole a small one which belonged to the ancestor of the Wollunqua snake totem."<sup>1</sup> In these tribes the ancestor — for, almost without exception, there is here only one — performs sacred ceremonies at certain spots, leaving behind spirit children which emanate from his body.<sup>2</sup> These spirit children are completely developed boys and girls, of reddish colour, with body and soul. They can be seen only by medicine-men.<sup>3</sup> From the above facts Spencer and Gillen arrived at the conclusion that "in every tribe without exception there is a belief in the reincarnation of ancestors." In connexion with the *mai-aurli* ancestors of the Urabunna, we read: "Since that early time when the various totem groups were thus instituted, the *mai-aurli* have been constantly undergoing reincarnation."<sup>4</sup> And when speaking of the Arunta churingas, they insist that "in the native mind the value of the churinga at the present day, whatever may have been the case in past times, lies in the fact that each one is intimately associated with, and is indeed the representation of, the *alcheringa* ancestor with the attributes of whom it is endowed. When the spirit part has gone into a woman, and a child has, as a result, been born, then that living child is the reincarnation of that particular spirit individual."<sup>5</sup> When an Arunta dies, Spencer and Gillen relate, and the mourning ceremonies connected with the burial are carried out, the soul of the deceased returns to its *nanja* and stays there in the company of its spirit guardian. In due time it becomes associated with another churinga; and eventually, "but not until even the bones have crumbled away," it may be reborn in human form.<sup>6</sup> Again and again Spencer and Gillen return to this point, their statements being quite categorical.<sup>7</sup>

It seems, however, that in this instance the conclusion of these authors is not borne out by their own facts.<sup>8</sup> When they tell us that at the time of their visit to the Warramunga country "there was an old Worgaia man visiting the Warramunga tribe, who, together with his

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Strehlow, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 146; cf. also pp. 148-9.

<sup>5</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 138.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 515.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 124, 125 sqq.; *Northern Tribes*, pp. 150, 156, 174, 273, 274, 606 sqq.

<sup>8</sup> See Leonhardi, in Strehlow, *op. cit.*, Part 2, p. 56, note.

brother, was the reincarnation of one of their alcheringa yams,"<sup>1</sup> it is not easy to see how the ancestral spirit could be reincarnated in both brothers at the same time. The inadequacy of the concept (or terminology?), moreover, can be seen throughout. When the *mai-aurli* of the Urabunna are supposed to undergo constant reincarnation, or when the ancestral groups of the Arunta myths — incomplete creatures originally, but shaped into complete men and women by the knife of the transformer — are believed to lead an eternal existence in the bodily frames of uncounted generations of totemites, there is a certain plausibility in the conception. Among the Kaitish, however, as explained above, we generally find a small number of ancestors (often two) going about with great quantities of churingas associated with spirit individuals, which they deposit in the ground. Again, among the Warramunga, as a rule, only one ancestor appears on the scene, and this condition becomes characteristic among the northern tribes. These ancestors leave behind spirit children which emanate from their bodies during the performance of sacred ceremonies. The spirits associated with the churingas (Kaitish), or the spirit children issued from the bodies of ancestors (Warramunga and northern tribes), are reborn by entering the bodies of women who pass near the spots haunted by such spirits. To speak here of a reincarnation of ancestors would obviously be either a mis-statement or a misapplication of the term. As far as the Arunta and Loritja are concerned among whom the belief would, logically at least, be plausible, we can fortunately make use of Strehlow's data. At the instance of von Leonhardi, the missionary made repeated inquiries among the natives with reference to this special point. He speaks in particular of three medicine-men, one of whom used to have great influence in his tribe. These medicine-men, as well as other natives, pronounced Spencer and Gillen's account inadequate. Referring to this matter,<sup>2</sup> Strehlow writes as follows:

"The male spirit children (*ratapa*) dwell in rocks, trees, or mistle-branches; the female ancestors in rock crevices. When a woman passes one of these spots, a *ratapa* enters her in the shape of an adult youth or girl with body and soul. Pains and nausea ensue. The *ratapa* in the woman's womb decreases in size and is born as a child which belongs to the corresponding totem.<sup>3</sup> When a man dies, his soul does not go to

<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Strehlow: Letter to Leonhardi, *Globus*, Vol. XCI, No. 18 (1907), p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> Von Leonhardi in his introduction to the first volume of Strehlow's work summarizes the different ways in which a woman may become pregnant, thus: (1) a *rapata* enters the woman;

the totem centre, but to the north, to the Island of the Dead (*Iaia*), where it remains until there is rain on earth and green grass grows. It wanders about until it sees a tree with white bark, from which it shrinks in terror. Then it goes back to its former habitat on earth and warns its friends against the dangers that are awaiting them. If the deceased left a small child, the father's soul enters it and stays until he grows a beard. Then it departs. If the son is an adult, the soul does not enter him, but waits behind his back until he marries and has a son, whom it enters. There it remains until the child grows up; then it departs. It wanders about until finally killed by a stroke of lightning. . . . The fact that the life of the spirit or soul thus comes to an end," concludes Strehlow, "is asserted by the blacks with utmost assurance. We may not, therefore, speak of reincarnation here, but only of a temporary incarnation of the parental or grandparental spirit in the son or grandson."

In regard to the other tribes discussed by Spencer and Gillen we have no such supplementary information; so their data must provisionally stand, subject, of course, to the doubt aroused by the logical inconsistency of their account. Whatever the facts as to the reincarnation of ancestral spirits may turn out to be, the data collected by Spencer and Gillen and Strehlow show conclusively that in all the tribes in question pregnancy is believed to be caused by a spirit entering a woman's body, and that the child is the embodiment, the incarnation, of that spirit.

These spiritual ideas, as well as the material objects representing them, the churingas, have taken deep root in the totemic life of the central Australian tribes. The churinga is the common body of an individual and of his ancestor, and a guarantee of the latter's protection, while the loss of a churinga may arouse his revenge.<sup>1</sup> Damage done to his churinga need not bring about the destruction of the owner, but it fills him with a vague sense of danger. The churinga, it may be added, is not the abode of the spiritual essence or life of any particular individual. Spencer and Gillen,<sup>2</sup> as well as Strehlow,<sup>3</sup> are quite explicit and positive as to this point. The churingas belonging to a totemic group

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such children are born with narrow faces; (2) the totem ancestor emerges from the earth and throws a small whirling-stick at the woman; the child thus conceived is born with a broad face; (3) the ancestor himself enters the woman and is reborn; such children have light hair.

<sup>1</sup> Strehlow: *Die Aranda und Loritja*, Part 2, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> Strehlow: *Die Aranda und Loritja*, Part 2, p. 76.

are kept at special storage places the access to which is interdicted to women and uninitiated young men.<sup>1</sup> When dealing with the *intichiuma*, we saw what an important part the churingas play in these ceremonies among the Arunta, Ilpirra, Unmatjera, and Kaitish. At the tribal *engwura* ceremonies special storage places are provided for the churingas belonging to the two moieties of the tribe, and they are constantly being used in connexion with the rites of initiation. In the form of a bull-roarer a churinga resounds at the initiation of boys, the women believing that "the roaring is the voice of the great spirit, Twanyirika, who has come to take the boy away."<sup>2</sup>

The most significant function of spirit individuals is to enter the bodies of women, thus causing pregnancy as well as determining the totem of the child. Women will avoid certain localities or abstain from touching certain trees; for unless they did so, the spirits associated with the spot or tree would be sure to enter them. The greatest freedom is left to the spirit among the Arunta and Luritsha, where the spirit of any totem may enter a woman, the child following. It is, to be sure, supposed to enter a woman of the proper phratry and class, but it may not do so. In connexion with the class, such blunders do at times occur, the child in such cases following the class of the spirit begetter. The corresponding beliefs of the Kaitish are quite similar to those of the Arunta. Among the northern tribes, beginning with the Warramunga, where the paternal law of totemic descent becomes stringent, the spirits are not supposed to make any mistakes as to class and totem. Among the Gnanji we find, in addition, the belief that the proper spirits are following a woman about, and whenever she feels the first pangs of pregnancy, it is one of these spirits that has entered her. A most curious adjustment has occurred among the Ura-bunna where, to meet their peculiar rule of descent, the spirit child is supposed to change its totem, clan, and moiety at each successive reincarnation, with the desired result of the child's always belonging to the same moiety.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 78; Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 246; see also *Northern Tribes*, pp. 497 sqq., and Howitt, op. cit., pp. 565 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 148-9. In view of Strehlow's strictures discussed before, statements like the above should be accepted with a grain of salt.

A large body of speculation clusters about these beliefs of the natives. Say Spencer and Gillen: "We have amongst the Arunta, Luritsha, and Ilpirra tribes, and probably amongst others, such as the Warramunga, the idea firmly held that the child is not the direct result of intercourse; that it may come without this, which merely, as it were, prepares the mother for the reception



*Reincarnation of Ancestral Spirits (North-West Coast and Proximate Regions).*—The Thompson River Indians believe that in some few cases souls return in new-born infants. If a boy dies and the mother gives birth to another boy, the latter is believed to be "his dead brother come to life again." If the second child also dies, the same belief is held regarding the third one, if a boy. One of the reasons for this belief given by the Indians is that when a child dies, the next one born is almost always of the same sex as the deceased one. The soul of an elderly person cannot be reborn; nor can the soul of a boy be reborn in a girl; nor can the soul of an infant come to life again in an

and birth also of an already formed spirit child who inhabits one of the local totem centres" (*Native Tribes*, p. 265). Strehlow failed to find among the Arunta the conception of the sexual act as a "preparation." He asserts that cohabitation is regarded merely as a pleasure, although in connexion with animals the physical nexus of things is well understood (*Die Aranda und Loritja*, Part 2, p. 52, note 7). Roth brings identical information about the "Tully River Blacks" (*North Queensland Ethnography, Bulletin 5*, pp. 22-3). In Frazer's fertile mind the above facts became the corner-stone of a hypothetical structure, the theory of conceptional totemism (*Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. I, pp. 139-72). Granted the authenticity of the facts, Frazer's interpretation invites dissent. "So astounding an ignorance of natural causation," he exclaims "cannot but date from a past immeasurably remote." Not merely "the intercourse of the sexes as the cause of offspring" is ignored, but also "the tie of blood on the maternal as well as the paternal side." But the deplorable ignorance of the natives could be a test of primitiveness, if at all, only if they proved to be too primitive to know better. They do know better, however, in the case of animals. This fact, together with some further evidence adduced by Lang (op. cit., pp. 190-3) and Schmidt (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1908, pp. 883 sqq.), ought at least to check any direct psychological interpretation of this "ignorance." We need not, with Lang, regard the Arunta theory as a "philosophic inference from philosophic premises" (*Tylor Essays*, 1907, p. 212); but in conjecturing that "their psychology has clouded their physiology" he probably comes little short of the mark.

Passing over Reitzenstein's pretentious but uncritical article ("Der Kausalzusammenhang zwischen Geschlechtsverkehr und Empfängnis im Glaube und Brauch der Natur- und Kulturvölker," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XLI, 1909, pp. 644-83), we may note Hartland's contribution to the subject. Speaking in the last chapter of his *Primitive Paternity* of "physiological ignorance on the subject of conception," he writes: "What I do mean is that for generations and generations the truth that the child is only born in consequence of an act of sexual union, that the birth of a child is the natural consequence of such an act performed in favoring circumstances, and that every child must be the result of such an act and of no other cause, was not realized by mankind, that down to the present day it is imperfectly realized by some peoples, and that there are still others among whom it is unknown" (op. cit., Vol. II, p. 250). The question seems worth asking whether this conclusion would not be as convincing without as it is with the copious evidence from mythology, folk-lore, and custom gathered in the author's two volumes. That mankind did pass through a period of ignorance as to the true relation between the sexual act, conception, and birth is scarcely a debatable subject. Evidence of the kind adduced does not help us to fix that ignorance chronologically. The real problem, therefore, consists in ascertaining, in each individual case, just how much ignorance or knowledge there is as to the matter. It will be remembered that Frazer found final confirmation of his "conceptional" theory of totemism in the facts of spirit impregnation as described by Rivers on the Trobriand island of Motu. More recent information supplied by Malinowski, after his prolonged researches in the Trobriands, makes this matter quite clear and definite. About spirit conception, for example, we read: "These rejuvenated spirits, these little pre-incarnated babies or spirit-children, are the only source from which humanity draws its new supplies of life. A pre-born infant finds its way back to the Trobriands and into the womb of some woman, but always of a woman who belongs

infant of another mother. "Formerly," adds Teit, "this belief was more general than it is now."<sup>1</sup>

Among the Shuswap, souls of dead children are sometimes reborn by the same mother or a near relative; a male is always reborn a male, and vice versa. In some rare cases adults were believed to be reborn by a loved relative. Human souls could never be reborn in animals.<sup>2</sup> Among the Lillooet the belief in reincarnation is well developed. The souls "of almost all, if not all" children are reborn by the same mother or by a relative. The sex does not change. There is a belief that adults may also be reborn "if they so desire," but actual cases are rare.<sup>3</sup> Among the Tlingit, Swanton obtained the following tale: "In a certain town a man was killed and went up to Kiwaa, and by and by a woman of his clan gave birth to a child." In the course of the story the child turns out to be the same man who had been killed. He told his people about Kiwaa where those killed by violence must go, etc. This story, or one like it, is repeated everywhere in the Tlingit country. If a person with a cut or scar on the body died and was reborn, the same marks reappeared on the infant.<sup>4</sup>

The Kwakiutl believe that "the soul of a deceased person returns

to the same clan and subclan as the spirit child itself. Exactly how it travels from Tuma (The Island of the Dead) to Boyowa, how it enters the body of its mother, and how there the physiological processes of gestation combine with the spirit activity, are questions on which native belief is not altogether consistent. But that all spirits have ultimately to end their life in Tuma and turn into newborn infants; that every child born in this world has first come into existence in Tuma through the metamorphosis of a spirit; that the only reason and real cause of every birth is spirit activity, are facts known to everybody and firmly believed by all" (*The Sexual Life of Savages*, Vol. I, pp. 171-2). And in conjunction with this we find other facts which place the native "ignorance of physiological conception" beyond the shadow of a doubt. Coitus is for pleasure, spirits procreate. Coitus, however, is also a "preparation" for impregnation (as among Spencer and Gillen's Arunta), in so far as it "opens up" the woman. This, to be sure, can also be achieved by other means. In confirmation of their attitude the natives point to the fact that their young girls who indulge their sex freely have no offspring (this, of course, is not strictly true, but, strangely enough, sufficiently so to sustain native opinion), whereas a certain old woman who even in her youth was so ugly as to exclude all thought of intercourse, bore many children.

This belief here extends to the animals. "The village pig," writes Malinowski, "is considered a great delicacy, while the flesh of the bush-pig is one of the strongest taboos to people of rank in Kiriwina, the transgression of which they hold in genuine horror and disgust. Yet they allow the female domestic pigs to wander on the outskirts of the village and in the bush, where they can pair freely with male bush-pigs. On the other hand, they castrate all the male pigs in the village in order to improve their condition. Thus, naturally, all the progeny are in reality descended from wild bush sires. Yet the natives have not the slightest inkling of this fact" (*ibid.*, p. 190).

<sup>1</sup> Teit: *Thompson River Indians*, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> Teit: *Shuswap*, p. 611.

<sup>3</sup> Teit: *Lillooet*, p. 287.

<sup>4</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit*, p. 463.

again in the first child born after his death.”<sup>1</sup> The beliefs about killer-whales, salmon, wolves, etc., into which human beings become transformed after death, or as which they lived before becoming men, also belong to the same category of ideas.

The belief in reincarnation may thus be said to exist in one form or another among the tribes of the North-West. In Australia, however, this belief has become an integral part of a complex system of beliefs and ceremonies, and in a great many tribes the central fact of their totemic organization; whereas in the American area no such process has taken place: the belief in reincarnation exists as a psychological detail in the lives of these Indians, but it has not affected their other beliefs and practices. We find no trace of it in the ancestral traditions of their clans and families; nor did it become associated with the many rites and ceremonies which form part of their totemic clan organization or of their secret societies.

*Guardian Spirits and Secret Societies (North-West Coast).* — The southern Kwakiutl, as we saw, are divided into non-exogamous clans which, through many transformations, arose out of original village communities.<sup>2</sup> Each clan derives its origin from a mythical ancestor on whose adventures the crests and privileges of the clan depend.<sup>3</sup> As described in the section on “Descent,” the ancestor in the course of his adventures meets the eponymous animal of the clan and in a variety of ways obtains from it supernatural powers or magical objects: a “magic harpoon” which ensures success in sea-otter hunting, the “water of life” which resuscitates the dead, and the like. He also obtains a dance, a song, and cries, which are peculiar to each spirit, as well as the right to use certain carvings.<sup>4</sup> The dance always consists in a dramatic presentation of the myth in which the ancestor acquired the gifts of the spirit. These spirits appear as animals, such as the bear, wolf, sea-lion, or killer-whale, or as fabulous monsters which become the protectors of men.<sup>5</sup>

Such a monster is the Sisiutl, a fabulous double-headed snake which assumes the shape of a fish. To eat or see it means certain death. All joints of the culprit become dislocated, and his head is turned backwards. But the snake can also be useful when friendly, and is claimed

<sup>1</sup> Boas: *British Association*, etc., *6th Report*, Vol. LX, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 333.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 396.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 371.

as protector by the warriors. Another monster is the cannibal woman Dzonoqwa who resides in the woods.<sup>1</sup>

The more general the use of a crest in a clan, the older is the tradition of its acquisition. When the tradition is more recent, the use of the crest is restricted to the descendants of the person to whom the tradition refers. In extreme cases one of the clansmen tells of his own acquisition of one of the crests of the clan. These spirits and their gifts are hereditary.<sup>2</sup>

The spirits so far dealt with appear only in the ancestral traditions in which no reference is made to any special relation between such spirits and the ancestor's descendants. But we also find other spirits acquired individually by the young men: they are the personal guardian spirits or protectors, thus corresponding strictly to the manitou of other Indian tribes. The youth expects to meet only spirits belonging to his clan.<sup>3</sup> Such a spirit is Making-War-All-Over-the-Earth. Under his protection a youth may obtain three different powers: invulnerability and power over the Sisiutl; capacity of catching the invisible Dream-Spirit (a worm) and of using it against his enemies; insensibility to pain, and power over death itself. With the assistance of The-First-One-to-Eat-Man-at-the-Mouth-of-the-River, another spirit, nine powers may be obtained.<sup>4</sup> The spirit Madem is a bird which gives the faculty of flying. Various ghost spirits give the power to return to life after having been killed. These spirits are also hereditary, and their number is limited. Accordingly, each spirit belongs to several clans in different tribes, but the powers bestowed by it in each case are slightly different. The spirits appear only in the winter; as a consequence, the social organization of the Kwakiutl tribes undergoes during that season a complete transformation.<sup>5</sup>

Like other tribes of this region, the Kwakiutl distinguish three social classes: nobility, common people, and slaves. The last-named are rated on a par with personal property; thus they are not, in a true sense, a part of the social structure. In the summer, during the "profane" season (*baxus*), the two classes comprise clans and families. The ancestor of each family has a tradition of his own, apart from the clan tradition; and with it go the usual crests and privileges. In each family only one man at a time represents the ancestor and enjoys his rank

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 370-2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 393.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 396 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 418.

and privileges. These men who range in importance according to the rank of their ancestors, constitute the nobility. At festivals they sit in order of their rank, called "seat." The noblest clan and the noblest name in the clan are called "Eagle."<sup>1</sup>

In the winter, the season of "the secrets" (*tsetsaega*), when the spirits appear, a complete rearrangement of the social order takes place. Individuals are no longer grouped according to clans and families, but according to the spirits which initiated them; while the minor subdivisions within these groups are determined by the ceremonies and dances bestowed upon individuals. "In summer *baxus* is on the top, the *tsetsaega* below, and the other way around in winter," say the Indians.<sup>2</sup>

During the ceremonies performed in the winter, the people are divided into two main bodies: the initiated ("Seals") and the uninitiated (*quequtsa*, a kind of sparrow).<sup>3</sup> The latter are divided into groups consisting of individuals to be initiated at approximately the same time. "For this reason, perhaps, natural age groups have arisen, which, from the religious point of view, form rank-groups within the tribe."<sup>4</sup> There are ten such groups or societies — seven male and three female — and most of them bear animal names.

Throughout the ceremonies the two groups are hostile to each other. The Seals attack and torment the Sparrows, who try to retaliate to the best of their ability.<sup>5</sup> The object of one part of the ceremony performed by each society is to secure the return of a youth who has been taken away by a supernatural being, the spirit protector of the society. When the novice finally returns, he is in a state of ecstasy, and ceremonies are performed to restore him to his senses.<sup>6</sup> Boas gives a list of fifty-three dances, arranged according to rank, which belong to the Kwakiutl and related tribes and are performed during the winter ceremonies.<sup>7</sup>

The guardian-spirit idea which among the Kwakiutl determined the seasonal periodicity of their society, was equally pronounced among other tribes of this region. Among the Thompson River Indians, everyone had a guardian spirit acquired at the puberty cere-

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 418.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 419.

<sup>4</sup> Boas: *Americanists Congress*, Vol. XIV (1904), p. 146.

<sup>5</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 420.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 431.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 498-9.

monies. Here these spirits were not inherited, except in the case of a few exceptionally powerful shamans. Any animal or object possessed of magic qualities could become a guardian spirit; but the powers of such spirits had become differentiated, so that certain groups of supernatural helpers were associated with definite social or professional classes.<sup>1</sup> Shamans had their favourite spirits some of which were natural phenomena (night, fog, east, west); other shamans' spirits were: man, woman, young girl, hands or feet, etc.; the bat; also objects referring to death (land of souls, ghosts, dead man's hair, bones, and teeth, etc.). Warriors had their set of spirits; so did hunters, fishermen, gamblers, runners, women. Each person partook of the qualities of his or her guardian spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Among the spirits peculiar to shamans parts of animals or objects were not uncommon, such as the tail of a snake, the nipple of a gun, the left or right side of anything, and the like.<sup>3</sup>

Although the range of animals, plants, natural phenomena, and inanimate objects which could become guardian spirits embraced practically the whole of nature, certain animals which possessed no mysterious powers did not figure as spirits. Such were the mouse, chipmunk, squirrel, rat, butterfly, etc. There were but few birds and scarcely any trees or herbs among the spirits.

The young men of the Lillooet acquired guardian spirits and, at the instigation of their elders, performed a "guardian-spirit dance" during which they imitated their supernatural protectors in motion, cry, and gesture.<sup>4</sup> In some of their clan dances masks were used which sometimes referred to an incident in the clan myth. The dancers personified

<sup>1</sup> Teit: *Thompson River Indians*, p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> This feature becomes of especial interest in its bearing on the so-called "split totems." This name was given by Frazer to totems which, he thinks, always originated on the occasion of a splitting-up of a large totemic group into smaller groups, or of a separation of a smaller group from the body of the larger one. In such cases the new groups would have as their totem either another variety or species of the original totem, or some part of it (Frazer: *Totemism*, p. 62). Among the Thompson River Indians no such process could be hypothesized as accounting for the origin of "split" guardian spirits; for these were individual helpers and were not as a rule inherited. This does not invalidate Frazer's hypothesis; but, the two phenomena being analogous, the existence of "split" guardian spirits makes it at least probable that psychological motives or objective processes other than those represented by Frazer may also have been responsible for the origin of split totems.

Another interesting point is this: a sharp line cannot always be drawn between a guardian spirit and an amulet. A snake's tail, for instance, figures as a guardian spirit; but the tail of a snake called "double-headed," on account of two small eye-like protuberances on the end of its tail, was also worn by hunters as a charm, to protect them during the grizzly-bear hunt (Teit: *Thompson River Indians*, p. 371).

<sup>4</sup> Teit: *Lillooet*, pp. 285-6.

either the ancestor himself or his guardian spirit.<sup>1</sup> Powerful guardian spirits enabled the shamans to perform wonderful feats.<sup>2</sup> A number of animal personal names taken from guardian spirits occur among the Lower Thompson and the Lower Lillooet.<sup>3</sup> The weapons, implements, and other objects of the Lillooet were often decorated with designs representing guardian spirits, and similar figures were painted and tattooed on face and body.<sup>4</sup> When the Shuswap lad began to dream of women, arrows, and canoes, or when his voice began to change, his time had arrived for seeking and obtaining a guardian spirit. Among these tribes we also find that the common people were divided into groups, membership in most of which was not strictly hereditary, while in others, like the Black Bear group, the hereditary character was more pronounced. Teit enumerates twenty-nine protectors of such groups, of which twenty are animals; the rest include plants, natural phenomena, inanimate objects, as well as hunger and famine. Some of these groups were closely interrelated; these could perform each other's dances and sing each other's songs. These groups cross-cut the hereditary families of the people; hence they were probably analogous to the secret dancing societies of the Kwakiutl.<sup>5</sup> The groups had distinct dresses, ornaments, songs, and dances, some of which could be performed at any time. Most dances, however, were performed in the winter. During the dances protective animal spirits, like the moose, caribou, elk, and deer, were impersonated. The actors dressed in the skins of these animals, with the scalp hanging over their heads and faces. Some had antlers attached to the head and neck. The dancers went through all the actions of the animals impersonated, dramatizing all the while the incidents of fishing, hunting, and snaring, the chase over lakes in canoes, and the final capture or death of the animal.<sup>6</sup>

Strictly analogous ideas are held by the coast tribes.

Among the Haida the guardian-spirit idea finds its clearest expression in the beliefs about shamans. When a man was "possessed" by a supernatural being which spoke through him or used him as a medium, the man was a shaman. When the spirit was in him, the shaman lost his personal identity and became merged with the spirit. He dressed as

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<sup>1</sup> Teit: *Lillooet*, p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 288-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 294-5, note 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 298, note 11.

<sup>5</sup> Teit: *Shuswap*, p. 577.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 580.

directed by the spirit, and used its language. When a supernatural being from the Tlingit country took possession of a shaman, he spoke Tlingit, even though otherwise ignorant of the language. His name also was discarded, and the spirit's name used instead. If the spirit changed, the name was also changed. "When the Above-People spoke through a man, the man used the Tlingit language; when his spirit was the moon, he spoke Tsimshian; when he was inspired by Wigít, he spoke Bella Bella."<sup>1</sup>

Not only a shaman, but any man could secure physical power, increase in property, success in war, hunting, fishing, etc., by observing strict dietary rules, staying away from his wife, bathing in the sea, taking sweat-baths, etc. Supernatural experiences might follow these practices, but the Haida believed, curiously enough, that satisfactory results could be secured without such experiences.<sup>2</sup> The dances of the secret societies among these people were closely associated with the potlatch and were performed at no other time. The names of the principal dances roughly corresponded to the dance names of the Kwakiutl societies. The character of the performances of the secret society was inspired by shamanistic ideas. As the supernatural being "spoke" or "came through" the shaman, so the Ulala spirit, the dog-eating spirit, the grizzly-bear spirit, "came through" the novice. Outside of the society, however, these spirits—except the grizzly-bear and wolf—were not even mentioned. The ties of membership in the society were very loose. "I do this," says Swanton, referring to his use of "society" instead of "societies," "because I cannot make out that there was any association between those who had been possessed by the dance spirit, other than that fact."<sup>3</sup>

The Tlingit shamans were even more powerful than those of the Haida. Whereas a Haida shaman usually had only one spirit and no masks, his Tlingit colleague could boast of several spirits and masks.<sup>4</sup> The subsidiary spirits and masks were all helpful in strengthening certain faculties of a shaman. A shaman, as well as an ordinary individual, could increase his powers by obtaining quantities of split animal tongues, especially those of land-otters, which were combined with eagle-claws and other articles and carefully stored away. Shamans

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<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit*, p. 463.



often performed merely for display, or they engaged in battles with other shamans, perhaps far away, trying to show their superior powers. Different spirits appeared to Wolf and Raven shamans.

We see how deeply the belief in guardian spirits enters into the life and thought of the Indian North-West, and the particular forms and applications of the belief are as varied as they are numerous. Reared on the fertile ground of animistic faith, guardian spirits among the Thompson River Indians embrace the greater part of animate and inanimate nature. Through the medium of art the realm of magical potentialities is widened still further; for when the representation of a spirit protector is carved on an implement or weapon, the object becomes the carrier of supernatural powers.<sup>1</sup> Among the Kwakiutl the guardian-spirit idea stands in the centre of a complex system of secret societies and initiation ceremonies. With the approach of winter, the guardian spirit, like a ghost of the past, emerges from its summer retirement and, through the medium of names, transforms the social organization of the people. Among the Haida and Tlingit the belief in the magical powers of supernatural helpers has engendered a prolific growth of shamanistic practices. The type of clan and family legend prevalent on the entire coast, particularly among the Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit, consists in an account of how the ancestor of the clan or family met his guardian spirit and obtained from it its supernatural powers; and in the dances of the secret societies this mythological motive finds its dramatic embodiment. The guardian-spirit idea also clings to distinctions of rank, which speak so eloquently to the coast mind. The greater the powers of your supernatural guardian, the more respect you command; and a secret society is ranked according to the powers of its members. It is not quite certain, on the other hand, whether the different rank of clans is to be classed with the same kind of ideas.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Teit: *Thompson River Indians*, p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the differences between European and American students of totemism were brought to a point in Lang's and Hill-Tout's discussion of the individual guardian spirit of British Columbia in its relation to the clan totem. I shall return to this problem further on, when dealing with the phenomena of descent and the general concept of totemism (see pp. 310 sqq., 312-3). Hill-Tout certainly overstates his case in asserting that clan totemism in British Columbia has developed out of individual guardian spirits. That it may have so developed is, I think, beyond doubt (Hill-Tout: "Totemism: Its Origin and Import," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Second Series, Vol. IX, pp. 71 sqq.; see also his paper: "The Origin of the Totemism of the Aborigines of British Columbia," *ibid.*, Vol. VII, pp. 6 sqq., where his attitude is somewhat more guarded). But what is significant for us at the present moment is the fact that the crests of clans and families in British Columbia partake strongly of the nature of guardian spirits; and if in many cases that character of the crest has become attenuated, so that "the tutelary genius

*Guardian Spirits (Australia).*—In Australia the guardian spirit is not a familiar feature. Thomas finds no difficulty in enumerating the few tribes in which the belief has so far been ascertained.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Parker's *yunbeai*<sup>2</sup> bear unmistakably the character of guardian spirits. In Strehlow's description, the totem inherited by an Arunta from his mother possesses to a degree the character of a protective spirit.<sup>3</sup> All these beliefs are, however, clearly of secondary importance in the lives of the native. The guardian spirit, moreover, is either quite distinct from the totem, as among the Euahlayi; or where the two concepts tend to combine, as in the Arunta mother's totem, the guardian-spirit element fails to assert itself to any marked degree.

*Art (North-West Coast).*—One of the striking features of all North-West coast villages are the so-called totem-poles erected in front of the houses and decorated with carvings which generally represent the legendary history of the clan or family,<sup>4</sup> but may also represent some other story, or merely the crests of husband, wife, or both.<sup>5</sup> In ancient times slaves were sometimes killed, and their remains buried under the totem- or house-poles. Later on they were no longer killed, but given away as presents. In all such cases the inverted figure of a man or an inverted human head was carved on the pole. In other cases coppers were either buried under the poles or given away. Whenever

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of the clan has degenerated into a crest" (Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 336), the fact remains that the crest figures as a guardian spirit in the family and clan traditions. The Tsimshian Bear myth does not prove "that the natives themselves turn into bears"—so much may be granted to Lang—nothing is proved except that in myth-making the natives think that this metamorphosis may have occurred in the past (Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, p. 212). But this thinking in myth-making is in itself an important psychological fact. To speak with Hill-Tout: "The main fact for us is that between a certain object or being and a body of people, certain mysterious relations have been established, identical with those existing between the individual and his personal totem" (Hill-Tout, loc. cit., p. 72). We do not know whether these people "are the lineal descendants of the man or woman who first acquired the totem," but that they trace their descent from that man or woman is for us all-important. We need not share Hill-Tout's opinion that "in the concept of a protective ghostly genius" lies the "true" significance of totemism in general; but that such is its significance "as held by the Indians themselves" (Hill-Tout: "Report on the Ethnology of Siciatl," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXIV, 1904, p. 328) is the important fact with which we are now primarily concerned. Granting that the totemistic beliefs and practices of British Columbia have become saturated with the guardian-spirit idea, we must also remember that the religious character of crests is by no means as strong or as constant as is that of individual guardian spirits (see Boas: "Tribes of the North Pacific Coast," 1906, pp. 240-1, who, in speaking of the northern tribes, reaches the conclusion that "the religious importance of the crest is in most cases very slight").

<sup>1</sup> *Man*, 1904, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> L. Parker: *The Euahlayi*, pp. 23, 29 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Strehlow: *Die Aranda und Loritja*, Part 2, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 324; Swanton: *Haida*, Plates i, ii, iii, and ix.

<sup>5</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 122.

this was done, coppers were shown on the poles, sometimes in the position of being held or bitten by crest animals.<sup>1</sup> During the dances of the secret societies, at initiation ceremonies and other festivals of the coast tribes, masks were used which were decorated with carved and painted designs of animals.<sup>2</sup> Some of these masks were very complex; many masks were so made as to open in two or more sections. The inner surfaces of the sections were also carved; and when opened, they revealed another carved surface — the inner body of the mask.<sup>3</sup> These masks were the property of clans, families, or dancing societies. They could be obtained by inheritance or at initiation. In the clan and family traditions the ancestor obtained, together with certain powers, a dance and a song, as well as the right to use certain masks and carvings.<sup>4</sup> When the members of a society wore the masks at a dance, they were supposed to impersonate the animals represented on the masks. The batons and rattles used at ceremonies were similarly decorated.<sup>5</sup> The use of animal designs and carvings was not restricted to totem-poles and ceremonial objects, but embraced practically the entire material culture of the people. We find the characteristic paintings or carvings on rocks,<sup>6</sup> coppers,<sup>7</sup> houses,<sup>8</sup> and canoes, on paddles, memorial columns,<sup>9</sup> dishes,<sup>10</sup> spoons,<sup>11</sup> gambling-sticks,<sup>12</sup> and a variety of other objects. The patterns of woven blankets and of tattooing were similarly inspired.<sup>13</sup>

The decorations are generally adjusted to the form of the object; the latter, in its turn, is sometimes affected by the character of the carving. The consciousness of the close relation between the decoration and the object decorated is expressed in the native belief that certain animals assume the shape of certain objects: "the whale becomes a canoe, the seal a dish, the crane a spoon."<sup>14</sup>

Apart from occasional realistic representations of human figures

<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Plates xxx, xxxi, pp. 447-9, 451 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 357, 464, 465, 467, 470 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 396.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 432-40 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, Plates xxiii-xxvi.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 342-3 and Plate iv.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 376-8; Swanton: *Haida*, Plates iv, xi, xii.

<sup>9</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, Plates v-viii.

<sup>10</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, pp. 392-4; *Thompson Art*, p. 376; *Art of the Pacific Coast*, pp. 123, 160, 170.

<sup>11</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, Plates xii-xix.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 140-54.

<sup>13</sup> Boas, in Emmons: *The Chilkat Blanket*, pp. 351 sqq.; *Art of the Pacific Coast*, pp. 151, 159.

<sup>14</sup> Boas: *Thompson Art*, p. 377, note 2.

and heads — the latter being particularly excellent <sup>1</sup> — the art of this area is characterized by the use of conventional animal forms. The two dominant tendencies of the art seem to be these: on the one hand, as nearly the whole animal is represented as is technically possible; on the other, some characteristic feature of each animal is singled out, the representation of which furnishes an unmistakable means of identifying the animal. Among such features are: the cross-hatched tail and large incisors of the beaver; the beak pointing downwards of the eagle; the curved beak, with point returning to mouth or chin, of the hawk; the dorsal fin of the killer-whale; etc.<sup>2</sup> In the conflict of these tendencies — for they are to a degree antagonistic — the first tends to give way to the second: the distinctive feature becomes so prominent as to crowd the rest of the animal into comparatively narrow quarters. This furthers so high a degree of conventionalization that identification would be impossible without the guidance provided by the distinctive feature. In extreme cases this feature or symbol is deemed sufficient to identify the animal, the other parts of its body being omitted altogether.<sup>3</sup> The important point for us is that the individuality of the animal is preserved: the precise meaning of the design remains in most cases perfectly distinct.<sup>4</sup>

Stories and traditions abound in interesting episodes revealing the remarkable power of realistic suggestion wielded by the carved representations. In the Tlingit story of the "Killer-Whale Crest of the Dagtlawedi," Natsilane is taken by his brothers-in-law to Katseuxti Island, far out at sea, where they desert him. "Then he began thinking, 'What can I do for myself?' As he sat there, he absent-mindedly whittled killer-whales out of cottonwood-bark, which works easily. The two he had made he put into the water; and, as he did so, he shouted aloud, as shamans used to do on such occasions. Then he thought they looked as if they were swimming; but when they came up again, they were nothing but bark. After a while he made two more whales out of alder. He tried to put his clan's spirit into them, as was often done by shamans; and, as he put them in, he whistled four times like the spirit, 'Whu, whu, whu, whu!' But they, too, floated up. Now he tried all kinds of wood, — hemlock, red cedar, etc. Finally he tried pieces of yellow cedar, which swam right away in the

<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, Plate xlix, and pp. 372, 503, 504, 652; *Art of the Pacific Coast*, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Boas: *Art of the Pacific Coast*, pp. 124-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139-40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

form of large killer-whales. They swam out for a long distance, and when they came back, again turned into wood. Then he made holes in their dorsal fins, seized one of them with each hand, and had the killer-whales take him out to sea.”<sup>1</sup>

In the Kwakiutl legend of Omaxtalatle, Qawatiliqala, when about to take his prospective son-in-law to his house, warns him. “ ‘Take care, brother, when we enter my house! Follow close on my heels,’ said Qawatiliqala. He told his brother that the door of his house was dangerous. They walked up to the door together. The door had the shape of a raven. It opened and they jumped in, and the raven snapped at him. All the images in Qawatiliqala’s house were alive, the posts were alive, and the Sisiutl beams.”<sup>2</sup>

The tendency of representing the entire animal, coupled with still another principle of utilizing for the decoration the entire space available, led to the curious interaction between the form of the object and the decoration, of which I spoke before, as well as to a unique process of dissection and rearrangement of the design.<sup>3</sup>

The art and the crest system of this area have exercised a mutually stimulating influence. The art in which the crest appears as a dominant motif furthered the application of animal designs for decorative purposes. Later, designs purely decorative in origin came to be interpreted totemistically. Neither seal nor sea-lion occur as crest animals, but the designs of these animals are among the most widely used; while the many varieties of the canoe-dish owe their origin mainly to animal designs used for decorating canoes. Some historical and semi-historical traditions, on the other hand, state that when a design or a decorated object was given to a person by a friend or a supernatural being, the object became his crest.<sup>4</sup> Boas believes that many of the crest myths of the Kwakiutl are quite recent and have developed parallel to the representations of these crests in art.<sup>5</sup> The importance ascribed to semi-realistic or at least to intelligible conventionalized designs is well brought out in the facial paintings. Here the peculiarities of the decorative field fostered, in many cases, the development of extreme conventionalization. “The full and rather realistic representations of animals, however, are considered of

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<sup>1</sup> Swanton: *Tlingit Myths*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, p. 384.

<sup>3</sup> Boas: *Art of the Pacific Coast*, pp. 144 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, pp. 392-3; *Tribes of the North Pacific Coast*, p. 241.

<sup>5</sup> Boas: *Tribes of the North Pacific Coast*, p. 241.

greater value, and as indicating higher rank, than conventional representations which consist of symbols of the animals."<sup>1</sup>

*Art (Australia).*—Representations of animals or plants are of rare occurrence in the art of central Australia. Crude outlines of animals and plants are met with among the rock-drawings, but neither objects used in sacred ceremonies nor weapons or household articles are ever decorated with realistic designs.<sup>2</sup> The great majority of designs found in this region, and with but few exceptions all of the designs used in sacred ceremonies, are geometric in character, the most common motives being the circle, the spiral, and parallel curved lines.<sup>3</sup> A characteristic feature of the ceremonies is the use for decorative purposes of "down derived from birds, or from birds and plants combined, and either whitened by mixture with pipe-clay or coloured various shades of red by means of ochre."<sup>4</sup>

During the ceremonies of certain totems drawings are made on the ground. Spencer and Gillen speak of one emu ground-drawing among the Arunta<sup>5</sup> and of eight such drawings of the Wollunqua totem of the Warramunga.<sup>6</sup>

With the exception of one curious drawing of the Wollunqua totem which contains an imitative feature,<sup>7</sup> the designs are purely symbolic, circles and bands being the decorative elements used. The meaning of these elements is not fixed, however. Identical figures in several sections of one design are differently interpreted; also, identical figures used by different totemic groups vary in significance. Thus the bands in Fig. 309 in Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes* (p. 737) are interpreted as the neck and the shed skins of snakes, while exactly similar bands in Fig. 310 (*ibid.*, p. 738) symbolize fire spreading in various directions. In the same figure the middle circle signifies fire; each of the next two circles, a spring of water; and another circle, a tree. In Fig. 315 (*ibid.*, p. 743) the circles stand for the bodies of six women, while the double bands are their legs "drawn up when they sat down, tired out with walking." Designs which have no meaning whatsoever when on neutral ground, acquire a very definite meaning

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Thompson Art*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 614-18.

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 697.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 722.

<sup>5</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 179-80.

<sup>6</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 737-40.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 740.

when drawn on a sacred object or spot. The designs on the churingas are also quite arbitrarily interpreted. A circle may represent a tree, a frog, a kangaroo, or what not, according to the totem with which the churinga is associated.<sup>1</sup> The same applies to the *nurtunja* of the northern and the *waninga* of the southern Arunta. Say Spencer and Gillen: "All that can be said in regard to these two characteristic objects is that in whatever ceremony either of them be used, then, for the time being, it represents the animal or plant which gives its name to the totem with which the ceremony is concerned. In a kangaroo ceremony, a *waninga* or *nurtunja* means a kangaroo; in an emu ceremony, an emu. The decoration is, so far as can be seen, perfectly arbitrary, and has at the present day no significance in the sense of its being intended to have any special resemblance to the object which the *nurtunja* or *waninga* is supposed to represent."<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the *engwura* ceremony a pole is erected around which the men gather, whereupon totemic designs are painted by the old men on the backs of the younger men. Although each of these designs is distinctive of some totem, there is no necessary relation between the design used and either the totem of the man decorated or that of the decorator. "A Panunga man of the snake totem decorated an Umbitchana man of the plum-tree totem with a brand of the frog totem. A Kumara man of the wild-cat totem painted a Bulthara man of the emu totem with a brand of the kangaroo totem," etc.<sup>3</sup>

The contrast between the art of Australia and that of the North-West Coast, in its relation to totemic phenomena, is a very striking one. In the American area we find semi-realistic motives pervading, to the exclusion of all other designs, the decoration of ceremonial objects, weapons, implements, household objects. Designs and carvings figure prominently in the myths of these people and through the medium of totem-poles become the material depositories of their mythological concepts. Here masks and carvings, together with songs and dances, are the property of clans, families, and individuals; and their possession leads to that most cherished goal, social rank. The relation, finally, of this art to the crests, while in part passive, is also active; it not merely reflects the totemic ideas of the people, but fosters them.

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 629.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

Not so in central Australia. A total absence of suggestive realistic motives prevents the art of this region from playing an active part in the inner or outer life of the totemites. Not that the decorative element is absent from the ceremonies. Much time and care, on the contrary, are bestowed upon the decoration of the dancers; and such features as the use of birds' down and ochre are distinctive of all sacred dances. While being thus utilized for totemic purposes, the art here fails to respond in its graphic aspect to the ideas of which it is made a symbol. The same circles, dots, spirals, and bands figure at the ceremonies of the different totem groups; then, at each particular performance, the totemic atmosphere of the moment transforms the geometrical designs into the animals, plants, or natural objects to which the given ceremony refers. The designs of the various totems do, however, differ to some extent and are inherited with the totems; but at the *engwura* ceremony referred to above, neither the decorator nor the man decorated need stand in any special relation to the particular decoration used—a condition that would certainly be considered monstrous by a Haida or Kwakiutl.

It is quite possible that, as suggested by Spencer and Gillen, the ceremonial art may impress the natives to the extent of prompting them to draw, in their leisure hours, similar designs on the ground or on rocks. But when severed from the ceremonial context, these designs fail to arouse the associations which they were momentarily made to carry. The geometrical pattern on rock or ground tells no story to the mind of the Australian native.

*Summary of Comparison between Australia and the North-West Coast of America.*—To summarize the results of our comparison. In two of the "symptoms"—exogamy and totemic names—there is apparently agreement between the two areas. Even here, however, a deeper analysis brings out fundamental differences. In Australia the exogamic functions are assumed by the phratries, the totemic character of which divisions, even in the past, seems problematic; and by the classes, social divisions of a totally different order to which there is no analogue among the tribes of the Pacific coast. The totemic groups, on the other hand, are but indirectly connected with exogamy,<sup>1</sup> excepting among tribes like the Urabunna. On the Pacific coast the rule of exogamy refers to the primary divisions of the Tlingit, Haida,

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 277 sqq.



Tsimshian, and northern Kwakiutl (Xaisla and Heiltsuq). The smaller subdivisions, here often named after localities — like the clans of the Tlingit and Haida and the corresponding divisions of the Tsimshian and northern Kwakiutl — are exogamous only vicariously, like the Australian totemic clans.<sup>1</sup>

The differences between the two areas are, however, more fundamental than would appear from the above. In juxtaposing the Australian and Indian social divisions we are not comparing units which are in any strict sense analogous. On the Pacific coast the functionally pre-eminent units are the clans which, it seems certain, were once local groups and are still commonly known by local names. The genetic or chronological relationship of these ancient local groups, the present clans, to the larger exogamous groupings, the phratries, remains an unsolved problem. It is certain, however, that the former did not originate from the latter through any process of "splitting up." Not so in Australia. While the relations between totemic clans and phratries are intricate and, at times, even puzzling, we must here regard the latter as the older institution. The loss of names by many phratries (can we doubt that originally they had them?), the fact that the meaning of most of the existing names has been forgotten by the natives; the dominance of the phratry over the clan in almost all ceremonies, and, finally, the uniformity of the phratric organization in almost the whole of Australia — all these considerations invite the assumption of greater antiquity for the phratry. While the case of the matrimonial classes may be left undecided, it seems fairly certain that the totemic clans have developed within the phratric organization by a sort of "splitting-up" process.

In Australia all clans bear the names of their totems; as to the phratries, we cannot be certain, even though the presumption is in favour of such names. On the Pacific coast the large exogamous groups of the Tlingit and Haida, and the clans of the Xaisla and Heiltsuq, have totemic names. Of the four Tsimshian phratries, however, only two have such names.

Here, again, the resemblance is more superficial than fundamental. In Australia the totemic name carries with it the suggestion of an intimate relation with the living representatives of the species, a relation which may in a broad sense be called religious or mystical. On the Pacific coast there is no such direct relation to the individuals

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 277-82.

of the eponymous species. We do, however, discover the religious element in the myths dealing with the animals of ancestral times, as well as in the ceremonial dances, where the crest animal, as symbolized by the masks and carvings, becomes the indirect object of a religious attitude. Now, if the eponymous function were as characteristic of the crest as it is of the Australian clan totem, the analogy of the two conditions would be fairly satisfactory. But this is far from being so. We saw that the group name, even when derived from a crest, may yet not be that of the principal crest of the group. The smaller subdivisions of the tribes — the families and clans — have, in addition to the eponymous crest of their phratries, also crests of their own from which no group names are derived. Two phratries of the Tsimshian, finally, have names not derived from crests. Thus it appears that among these tribes we cannot, as in Australia, identify the totem with its eponymous function. In some instances the relationship holds, in others it does not; either the crest is the totem but not eponymous, or the name is totemic but is not that of the crest or of the principal crest.<sup>1</sup>

In Australia we find a great many taboos which have nothing to do with the totemic system; but there is also a rich variety of restrictions applying to totem animals and plants. The character of many of these taboos shows clearly that they cannot be interpreted as reflecting an attitude of regard or respect for the totem, but are determined by conditions lying in an entirely different plane. The taboos found in connexion with the *intichiuma* ceremonies, for instance, seem to be entirely determined by the latter. On the Pacific coast many common and some fanciful taboos are encountered, but none of them bear any relation to crest or eponymous animals. If an animal like the killer-whale, a favourite crest, is taboo to sea-hunters, it is so not in its capacity of crest, but as the animal into which the hunters expect to be transformed after death.<sup>2</sup>

The Australian totem clans invariably trace their descent from mythological beings which are represented in the myths as embodiments of the totem animal, plant, or inanimate object. Among the northern tribes of the Pacific coast (Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian) there is no such belief in descent; among the southern tribes, however,

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 319 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> I do not mean to say that this belief must necessarily have been the cause of the taboo, for it is just as plausible to regard it as a secondary interpretation of a taboo that may have originated in a quite different way.

beginning with the Kwakiutl, we must recognize the presence, in many cases, of a belief in descent from the crest animal, even though in a somewhat veiled form.<sup>1</sup>

Among the tribes of central Australia magical ceremonies — the *intichiuma* — which are supposed to regulate the food-supply, lend the dominant note to the totemism of the region. These performances, in fact, together with the rites of initiation, represent the ceremonial side of the totemic life of the people. On the North-West Coast magical ceremonies are performed in connexion with fishing, hunting, gathering berries, etc., but here these ceremonies bear no relation to the totemic system. And similar ceremonies regularly occur among the Salish of the interior — Thompson, Lillooet, Shuswap — which have no totemism at all.

Another characteristic feature of the Australian tribes is a belief in the transmigration of souls, which pervades their mythology, affects their ideas as to birth and descent, figures in a number of tribes as an important element of the totemic ceremonies, and, in some cases, determines the totemic membership of individuals. In the American area the belief in reincarnation is found in most of the tribes as an isolated phenomenon which figures but little outside of its special sphere and is in no way correlated with totemism. The belief in guardian spirits, on the other hand, has among these tribes attained a high degree of development. The secret societies are based upon it. It sounds the key-note of the ceremonies of initiation. It has deeply affected the totemic art of the region and finds characteristic expression in mythology. It has also fostered the ideas of rank, in individuals and groups. In Australia guardian spirits, though not general, are by no means unusual. Here, however, they are sterile of associations; and the totemic system is but little, if at all, affected by them.

In a prolific development of art — realistic in part and in part highly conventionalized — we must see the second dynamic element of North-West totemism. Deeply saturated with totemic associations, the art has flooded the entire material culture of the area, thus becoming the most conspicuous factor in the secular and ritual life of the people. Nay, the art of the coast is more than an important factor in totemism — it has become a self-perpetuating source of totemistic suggestion. The Australian scene is quite different. Paintings (on rocks or on the ground) and decorations of various kinds are extensively used in

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<sup>1</sup> The complex nature of the concept among these tribes was indicated before (see pp. 227 sqq.).

Australian ceremonies. The function of art here is, however, perfectly passive. The designs and decorations, almost invariably geometrical, do not, in themselves, suggest particular objects or creatures. Identical designs and decorations figure in different ceremonies and acquire their specific meaning, totemic or otherwise, merely through the temporary association with a given ceremony.

The ideas of rank, so prominent in the social life of the coast Indians, have also affected the character of totemism. Eponymous animals, crests, spirit protectors of secret societies, are all graded as to rank; and in all cases that grading reflects on the social standing of the individuals comprised in a given group. This feature is conspicuously absent in Australia. If one or another totem attains exceptional prominence — like, for example, the Wollunqua totem of the War-ramunga — the individuals of the clan in no way partake of the eminence of their totem.

The number of totems, finally, is very large in Australia, in some tribes embracing practically the whole of nature, animate and inanimate. On the North-West Coast, on the contrary, the number of crests is relatively small, and, with few exceptions, the crests are animals or birds.<sup>1</sup>

These conclusions may now be represented in tabular form.<sup>2</sup> (See table on page 268.)

An inspection of the table will reveal, without further analysis, that totemic complexes are both similar and different. Certainly there is considerable variability in content. The features are not always the same, nor is the role played by particular features. Also, it is clear that the range of features that may enter a totemic complex and become part of it, is much wider than was once supposed. But the totemic complexes are also similar, sufficiently so to be identified as such. Without pursuing this any further, at this point it seems desirable to supplement this intensive comparison of two areas by a more sweeping if less detailed survey based on data from different parts of the primitive world. In the course of this survey I propose to examine exogamy, totemic names, the idea of animal descent, taboo, and the religious aspect of totemism, with a view to discovering how these cultural

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<sup>1</sup> The theoretical significance of this phenomenon may perhaps be more fitly discussed at another place.

<sup>2</sup> In order to bring out more clearly the variability of content in totemic complexes I shall include in the table, in addition to the Tlingit and Haida and the central Australians, also the totemic complexes of the Baganda and of Mabuig Island, which have not been analysed in these pages.

## TOTEMIC COMPLEXES

Among the Tlingit and Haida Indians, in central Australia, among the Baganda (East Africa), and in Mabuia Island (western Torres Straits)

	<i>Tlingit and Haida</i>	<i>Central Australia</i>	<i>Baganda</i>	<i>Mabuia</i>
Exogamy	Phratries; clans (indirect)	Phratries; classes; gentes or clans (indirect); fixed relationship groups	Gentes	Phratries (formerly); clans
Group names	Phratries with eponymous totems (crests); clans with district names	Meaning of phratry and class names doubtful; gentes named after totems	Gentes not named after totems	Phratry names with totemic reference; clans with district names
Taboo	No totemic taboo	Strict taboo	Taboo even more strict	Taboo
Descent from totem	Absent	Universal	Descent of gentes from human ancestors	Absent
Magical ceremonies for multiplication of totem	Absent	Present	Absent	Present
Totemic reincarnation	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent
Art	Saturated with totemic ideas; crest (not totem) is sacred	Symbolic totemic art not differentiated according to gentes	No totemic art	Totemic art (in ornaments and on body)
Physical and psychic resemblance of totem and totemite	Absent	Absent	Absent	Marked
Rank	Crests differ in rank, which reflects on totemites	No rank grading of totems or gentes	No rank grading of totems except in royal gentes	No rank grading
Number of totems in social unit	Several crests (Haida); one crest (Tlingit)	One main, several associated totems in each gens	Two totems in each gens (with exceptions)	Several clans have one main totem and several subsidiary ones

features behave both inside and outside of totemic complexes. A similar analysis could also be made of other features, such as magical ceremonies, ideas of reincarnation, artistic symbolism, and the like. But this more ambitious task will not be attempted in these pages.

## 3

## THE TOTEMIC COMPLEX

## EXO GAMY AND ENDO GAMY

*Clan Exogamy and the Other "Symptoms."* — Clan exogamy, which so often occurs in totemic tribes, is by no means rare outside of totemism.

The Khasis of Assam are divided into a great number of exogamous clans with maternal descent. These clans do not (with a few exceptions) bear animal or plant names, nor do the Khasis know of any totems.<sup>1</sup> The same is true of the Meitheis (Assam), who comprise seven divisions, called *salais* or *yeks*. Each *yek* contains a great number of *sageis* or *yumnaks* which bear the names of their founders. The *yeks* are non-totemic exogamous groups with paternal descent, but marriage into the maternal *yek* is also prohibited for three (formerly five) generations.<sup>2</sup> The Mikirs comprise three sections, with names probably designating localities. Through these sections run four principal *kurs* — non-totemic exogamous divisions which are in turn subdivided into smaller groups. Descent is paternal.<sup>3</sup> The Garos comprise several geographical divisions, through which run two *katchis*; another *katchi* is restricted to a rather narrow locality. These social groups are non-totemic and exogamous; they contain minor subdivisions — the *machongs* — which are totemic.<sup>4</sup> The universally exogamous *gotras* which generally constitute the minor subdivisions of the Indian castes, are sometimes totemic, but non-totemic *gotras* are also common.<sup>5</sup> Similarly in Africa. The Nandi, who live in the neighbourhood of Lake Victoria Nyanza, are divided into a number of totemic clans. Each clan contains several families with names derived

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<sup>1</sup> Gurdon: *The Khasis* (1907), p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Hodson: *The Meitheis* (1908), p. 73; Shakespear, in *Man*, Vol. X, No. 4 (1910), pp. 59-61.

<sup>3</sup> Stack: *The Mikirs* (1908), pp. 15-17.

<sup>4</sup> Playfair: *The Garos* (1909), pp. 64-6.

<sup>5</sup> Risley: *Census of India*, Vol. I (1901), "Ethnographic Appendices," pp. 100-10, 120-4.

from ancestors who first came to settle in Nandi. Here "a man may not marry a woman of the same family as himself, though there is no objection to his marrying into his own clan."<sup>1</sup> Other illustrations come from America. The Gros Ventres were divided into bands, which, although not totemic, were exogamous. Descent was paternal, but the prohibition of marriage extended also to the mother's band.<sup>2</sup> The Crow are divided into six phratries, which contain from two to four exogamous clans. The clans do not bear animal or plant names, nor is there evidence of totemistic ideas of any kind. Among the Omaha many of the totemic gentes were exogamous, as well as most of the sub-gentes; in addition, however, there were certain other divisions, which, although in no way totemic, served the purpose of regulating marriage. Unfortunately, Dorsey's account is here very general, and we learn nothing of the precise nature of these subdivisions. The Ictasanda gens was, "for marriage purposes," divided into three parts;<sup>3</sup> so was the Deer-Head gens.<sup>4</sup> The gens of the "Earth-Lodge Makers" contained "three sub-gentes and two for marriage purposes";<sup>5</sup> etc. In Australia, as we saw, the two types of social divisions which are the carriers of exogamous functions — the phratry and the class — cannot, as a whole, be classed as totemic. At the present time they certainly are not; as to the past, the occasional animal names for phratry and class must, of course, be taken into consideration; and in the present state of our knowledge final judgment must be suspended. Still, it remains at least possible that the phratry never possessed any totemic character, while of the class this is highly probable, in view of the relation of the classes to groups of blood relatives.

Polynesia furnishes further examples where the presence of some or all of the other "symptoms" is not accompanied by exogamy. The people of the mountainous district in the interior of Viti Levu (Fiji) live in independent communities each of which has its sacred animal that cannot be eaten. These communities comprise smaller divisions, often with their own tabooed animals and plants. Neither the large nor the small divisions are exogamous. The belief in descent from the totem, on the contrary, is very strongly developed. "Here in collect-

<sup>1</sup> Hollis: *The Nandi* (1909), pp. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Kroeber: "Ethnology of the Gros Ventre," *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. I, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> Dorsey: "Omaha Sociology," *Bureau of Ethnology, 3d Annual Report*, p. 249.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

ing a genealogy, an informant went back from human to human ancestor till as a perfectly natural transition he would state that the father of the last mentioned was an eel or other animal." The eel was the ancestor of an entire community. The smaller groups also often traced descent from their sacred animals.<sup>1</sup> In Samoa we find a number of districts with their *atuas* — the octopus, owl, shell, etc. Food-prohibitions referring to these sacred animals seem to have existed in ancient times; but no traces of a belief in descent from the totem can be found, nor are the divisions of the people exogamous.<sup>2</sup> In Tonga each family had its *otua* which could be an animal, a stone, or a man. The *otua* was never eaten by the family which traced its descent from it. The families were not exogamous.<sup>3</sup> The people of Tikopia Island have their *atua* animals (the same word is used for "ancestor"). Some of the *atua* are taboo to the whole community, others are merely recognized by one of the four main sections. Descent is traced from a man who became transformed into the animal sacred to the particular group or section. These sections are not exogamous.<sup>4</sup> Among the African Nandi, referred to above, where the families are non-totemic but exogamous, the totemic clans are not exogamous. Similar conditions prevail in other African tribes. We shall see below that in many instances where totemic clans appear to be exogamous, the association with exogamy is by no means as fundamental as it at first sight appears.

So much to indicate that clan exogamy, although a usual concomitant of other totemic features, is not a constant, hence not a necessary, concomitant of the latter; and, again, where the other features are absent, clan exogamy may nevertheless occur.

*Local Exogamy.* — When investigating the local distribution of clans, we generally find that each clan is spread over a wide area, its members residing in several local groups; thus in each local division several clans are represented. In exogamous communities with maternal descent, clans are almost always so distributed. In others, however, the locality rises into prominence, and itself assumes certain social functions. If there is exogamy, the local group as such may

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<sup>1</sup> Rivers: "Totemism in Polynesia and Melanesia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXIX (1909), p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 159-60.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.



become the exogamous unit. The organization found by Rivers among the Miriam of the Murray Islands is a case in point. "In defining their marriage regulations," writes Rivers, "the social unit of which the islanders usually speak is the village. They say that a man must not marry his father's village or his mother's village or that of his father's mother, and if one of his ancestors had been adopted, he is also debarred from marrying into the village to which he would have belonged by actual descent."<sup>1</sup> Howitt describes local exogamy in the Wotjobaluk tribe, where it is found in conjunction with the other more common matrimonial restrictions. Class (phratry), totem, relationship, are all an individual's "flesh" and must be considered when a wife is being selected. "Another restriction depends on locality, for a man cannot marry a woman from the same place as his mother, as it is said that his 'flesh' is too near to that of those there. Hence it is necessary that a wife shall be sought from some place in which there is no 'flesh' near to his. The same is the case as to the woman."<sup>2</sup> The local feature is still more prominent among the Gourn-ditch-mara of western Victoria. Here a man, "in addition to the law of the classes (phratries)," was prohibited from marrying "into his mother's tribe, or into an adjoining one, or one that spoke his own dialect."<sup>3</sup> Where some definite social division — say, a totem clan — is coextensive with a local group, difficulties of interpretation may arise which must be kept in mind by investigators. Note the case of the Kurnai. Here, through the working of paternal descent, the totems "became fixed in definite localities." Now, "as . . . a man could not marry a woman belonging to his own district, he necessarily married some woman whose totemic name differed from his, thus still following unconsciously the exogamous rule."<sup>4</sup> Howitt is no doubt right in his interpretation; he has no difficulty in answering the question: are we dealing with a localized exogamous group or with an exogamous local group?<sup>5</sup> Wherever the investigator is less thoroughly familiar with his data, the question is likely to present serious difficulties.

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<sup>1</sup> Rivers, in *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, Vol. V, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Howitt: *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Dawson, cited by Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

<sup>4</sup> Howitt, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

<sup>5</sup> It seems highly probable that most, if not all, of the tribes of the Pacific North-West have passed through a stage in which clans occupied separate villages. Without much fuller information about these remote conditions than is now available, we could not decide whether the village as such, or a social group occupying a village, constituted at that time the important social unit.

*Clanship and Kinship.* — Similar difficulties arise whenever we have to deal with communities where, say, clans, on the one hand, and groups of blood relatives, on the other, appear as important social factors. Spencer and Gillen, Howitt, and others in their accounts of the social organization of Australian tribes have much to say about prohibited degrees of relationship which appear on a par with the many other matrimonial regulations referring to phratry, class, or clan membership. The above authors do not, however, correlate the various sets of prohibitions;<sup>1</sup> they leave us quite in the dark, for instance, as to the connexion between relationship prohibitions, on the one hand, and those prohibitions which refer to definite social groups, on the other. What Rivers relates about the Todas is of interest in this connexion. He found among these people a number of exogamous clans, as well as a set of strict matrimonial regulations based on degrees of relationship. Further inquiry, however, revealed the fact that clan exogamy among the Todas was not primary but derived; that they, in fact, recognized only one kind of exogamous rule — that, namely, based on relationship. Says Rivers: "He [the Toda] has no two kinds of prohibited affinity, one depending on clan relations, and another on relations of blood kinship, but he has only one kind of prohibited affinity, to which he gives the general term *pūliol*, including certain kin through the father and certain kin through the mother, and there is no evidence that he considers the bond of kinship in one case as different from the other as regards restriction on marriage." And, again: "It seemed to me in several cases as if it came almost as a new idea to some of the Todas that his *pūliol* included all the people of his own clan." Hence Rivers draws the obvious inference: "The fact that the Toda includes all those kin whom he may not marry under one general term, and that the kin in question include members both of his own and other clans, goes to show that the Todas recognize the blood-kinship as the restrictive agency rather than the bond produced by membership of the same clan."<sup>2</sup> Wissler records a similar condition among the Blackfoot who are at the present time divided into bands the members of which "look upon themselves as blood-relatives." Here "marriage is forbidden between members of the band as blood relatives, but not between the members as such."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is done by Radcliffe-Brown (see my forthcoming *Introduction to Anthropology*).

<sup>2</sup> Rivers: *The Todas*, p. 510.

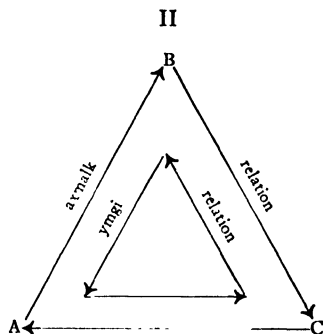
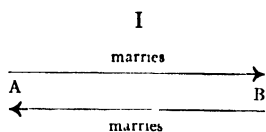
<sup>3</sup> Wissler: "The Blackfoot Indians," *Annual Archaeological Report*, 1906, p. 173.

The Gilyak, to whom we shall return below, furnish another instructive example. These people are organized in gentes with paternal descent. Sternberg describes the gentes as exogamous and proceeds with a detailed exposition of the relationship system which has eluded other authors, and of the concomitant marriage regulations.<sup>1</sup>

Sternberg's own account makes it clear that here, more obviously than among the Todas, the gens as such is not the exogamous unit, but that marriage is regulated exclusively by degrees of relationship. The men of gens A take wives from gens B. This fact constitutes gens B as the gens of "fathers-in-law" (*axmalk*), while gens A with reference to B is the gens of "sons-in-law" (*ymgi*). These appellations in themselves indicate that it is not gens B as such that a man is concerned about matrimonially, but gens B as containing the class of his "fathers-in-law," and vice versa. Further details corroborate this impression. The matrimonial relation A/B, once established, cannot be reversed; the men of B can never take their wives in A. A finds in B a class of wives, which makes B *axmalk* with reference to A; B, on the other hand, finds in A classes of sisters, daughters, nieces, but not wives; hence A is *ymgi* to B and can never be anything else. It suffices for one man of A to marry a woman of B, and the above relation is established; the rest follows as a matter of course. Further complications presently develop. The young men of B must have wives, and find them in C; the fathers of A must have husbands for their daughters, and find them in D; and so on. Thus all the gentes become entangled in the matrimonial network. A gens may have several *axmalk* and several *ymgi* gentes. Each gens appears here as an *axmalk*, there as an *ymgi* gens; but no gens can be both *axmalk* and *ymgi* to another gens. Now, the latter condition, impossible among the Gilyak, is precisely what we find wherever a typical exogamous relation exists between two groups as such. Clan or phratry or class A marries B; clan or phratry or class B marries A. The two groups, moreover, are matrimonially self-sufficient: both are provided with husbands and wives. Among the Gilyak, on the other hand, not only does the fact of A marrying into B make it impossible for B to marry into A, but A + B no longer constitute a complete matrimonial whole, for A lacks husbands, while B lacks wives; C at least is required in addition. To contrast the two conditions diagrammatically (see next page):

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<sup>1</sup> Sternberg: *The Gilyak* (MS.).



In Diagram I, what we may call the minimum exogamous integer consists of two units; in Diagram II, of three. That the social corollaries of the two systems are thoroughly different is obvious.

It appears from the above remarks that extreme care must be exercised when one tries to determine the precise nature of the exogamous code at any given place and time. We may discover local exogamy or kinship exogamy where *prima facie* evidence disclosed nothing but clan exogamy, and vice versa.

What is true of exogamy is true of endogamy. Again the Todas furnish an illustration.

The exogamous clans of the Todas are segregated into two main divisions — Tartharol and Teivaliol. These divisions are endogamous. "Although a Teivaliol man is strictly prohibited from marrying a Tartharol woman, he may take a wife of this division to live with him at his village." Such unions are recognized as a form of marriage, but they "differ from the orthodox form in that the children of the union belong to the division of the mother." Similarly a Tartharol man may enter into a union with a Teivaliol woman, but then he must "either visit her occasionally or go to live at her village."<sup>1</sup> The two incidents recounted by Rivers are particularly illuminating. On one occasion a Tamil smith, on another a Mohammedan merchant, fell in love with Toda women and lived with them. In neither case did the Todas resent the woman's action, "so long as she remained in the community."<sup>2</sup> Clearly, the sentiment at the bottom of Toda endogamy, as we now find it, is not the pride of superior blood which shrinks from pollution, but the fear of depletion of numbers. As long as the community is not deprived of one of its members, or if it

<sup>1</sup> Rivers: *The Todas*, p. 505.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 509.

can at least claim as its own the offspring of a union, the parties to the latter may belong to different endogamous divisions, or one of the pair may even be an outsider.<sup>1</sup>

*The Australian Totemic Clan and Exogamy.* — With the foregoing discussion well in mind, let us now attempt a more careful analysis of marriage relations in Australia.

Whatever may have been the condition in the past, all authorities agree that exogamy and totemism are associated in all but a few Australian clans. No marriage within the totem is the rule; hence the totemic clan is exogamous. When Spencer and Gillen's book on the Arunta first saw light, great commotion resulted in the camp of anthropologists. Here, for once, the universal law (for Australia, at least) seemed to break down; the totem clan was not strictly exogamous: under certain conditions a man could marry a woman of his own totem.<sup>2</sup>

It was an "unheard of kind of totemism," a heresy which went contrary to all established opinions. The non-exogamous character of the Arunta totem clan, together with the absence of totemic descent, became the "Arunta anomaly."<sup>3</sup> Attempts were made to account for it;<sup>4</sup> and presently the question arose: Are the Arunta primitive or advanced? Are they on their way out of or into totemism?

Now exogamy, of course, literally, means "marriage without or outside of " (a certain group) — an imperative which has its negative correlate in the prohibition of marriage within the group. Obviously, the term expresses a relation between at least two groups. The same applies to endogamy. An isolated group could not logically be called either exogamous or endogamous, whether its members married with each other or refused to do so. Apart from this consideration of exogamy (or endogamy) as an objective fact, a psychological factor must also be taken into account. Our discussion of clan exogamy in relation to kinship exogamy brought out the variability of the psychological factor. When the fact of a given social group's not marrying within itself is ascertained, the information acquired is but partially

<sup>1</sup> In primitive conditions numbers mean probable success in the struggle for existence. We may assume, therefore, that in the history of human societies sentiments like those of the Todas often resulted in endogamous tendencies.

<sup>2</sup> See Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Lang: *Social Origins*, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> See Durkheim, in *L'Année sociologique*, Vol. V (1900-1), pp. 88 sqq.; *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 1903-4, pp. 132 sqq.; and Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, pp. 59-82.

complete. The exogamous character of a group may be due to the fact that it comprises — as in the Toda clans — individuals so related as to preclude intermarriage; or the group may be exogamous as occupying a definite locality (Blackfoot); or the exogamy may result from the group's being comprised in a larger social division which is exogamous (Tlingit and Haida clans); the group as such, finally, may be the source of its own exogamous functions. Only in the last instance would we be justified in regarding the group as an exogamous unit. A failure to differentiate the above concepts may obviously lead to grave misconceptions as to the underlying principles of a given social organization. With these distinctions well in mind, we may now return to the Australian totem clan in order to define with greater precision its position in the different kinds of social structures found in that continent.

Take a typical case of exogamy exemplified by the dichotomous division of a tribe into moieties or phratries (as in Australia and elsewhere). A man of group A may not marry a woman of group A and must marry a woman of group B. There is complete reciprocity: the marriage rights and restrictions of the members of groups A and B are strictly parallel and compensate each other. Do the same relations obtain among the Dieri who may in our discussion represent the tribes with phratries and totem clans, but without classes? It can be easily shown that the situation is quite different.

Here clan *x* may not marry with itself and must marry into phratry B; phratry B may not marry with itself and must marry phratry A. There is no complete reciprocity for the reason that clan *x* which may not marry with itself is also debarred from marrying into any of the other clans of phratry A. To put it differently: clan *x* may not marry into phratry A and must marry into phratry B. Thus it behaves exactly as would an individual of phratry A if there were no clans. And just as the individual would merely figure as a member of an exogamous group, the phratry, so does clan *x*. And psychologically there is, of course, a difference between a clan *x*, exogamous in its own right and standing to another exogamous unit (clan *y*) in the same relation in which the latter stands to clan *x*, and a clan *x* which, *as part* of a large exogamous group A, stands to another large exogamous group B in the same relation in which the latter stands, not to clan *x*, but to the large exogamous group A of which clan *x* is a part.

Further inquiry might bring out the fact that some special sentiment attaches to the prohibition of marriage within the clan, and that

any infringement of that prohibition is especially resented.<sup>1</sup> Even then, however, the clan, in an organization like that of the Dieri, could not be considered an exogamous unit. An exogamous relation is fully represented only when both the group within which marriage is prohibited and the one into which it is permitted or prescribed are given. Keeping this in mind, we find that any attempt to represent the Dieri clan as an exogamous unit inevitably leads to contradictions. Let phratry A contain the clans  $a^1$ ,  $a^2$ , and  $a^3$ ; phratry B, the clans  $b^1$ ,  $b^2$ , and  $b^3$ . Assuming clan  $a^1$  to constitute an exogamous unit, the complementary unit would be  $B + a^2 + a^3$ . This unit would itself be matrimonially heterogeneous, consisting of  $a^2 + a^3$  into which clan  $a$  may not marry, and of B into which it may. If clan  $a^2$  were isolated instead of clan  $a^1$ , the complementary unit would be  $B + a^1 + a^3$ . We see that clan  $a^1$  appears as an exogamous unit in the first case, as part of a larger group in the second. The reverse is true of clan  $a^2$ . The same holds of the other clans; so that a complete representation of the exogamous situation would require six separate diagrams, each clan appearing as an independent unit only once and as part of a larger group in all other cases, the composition of the group being in each case different. In the majority of tribes the actual number of clans is likely to be larger than six, and the complexity of the conditions would be proportionately greater.

But it is quite inconceivable that arrangements like the above should correspond to any actual elements in the attitude of the natives. The complexity is an artificial one, being due to the attempt to represent the clan as an exogamous unit. The fact of the matter, of course, is that clan  $a^1$ , as well as clans  $a^2$  and  $a^3$ , may not marry into  $a^1 + a^2 + a^3 = A$ , and must marry into B. *Q.E.D.* We thus may be quite confident that in organizations like that of the Dieri the clan could not be regarded as an exogamous unit, even if the prohibition of marriage within the clan were shown to be particularly stringent.<sup>2</sup>

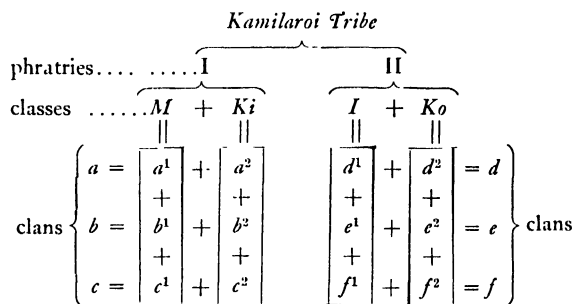
<sup>1</sup> Cf., in this connexion, my *Early Civilization*, pp. 248 sqq. The matter will be discussed more fully in my *Introduction to Anthropology*.

<sup>2</sup> A still different formulation could be used to clarify this issue. Exogamous regulations may be negative or positive. Negative exogamy, for example, states:  $a$  may not marry  $a$ ; positive exogamy states:  $a$  must marry  $b$ . Now, negative exogamy does not imply any positive regulation:  $a$  may not marry  $a$ , but it may marry—any other group. Positive exogamy, on the other hand, implies negative exogamy: if  $a$  must marry  $b$ , it evidently may not marry  $a$  or—any other group. Thus we may speak of *negative* and *positive* exogamy and of negatively and positively exogamous units. In negatively exogamous units the matrimonial situation is only partially defined. In the positively exogamous units, like the Australian classes, the matrimonial situation—speaking of social groups, not of individuals—is defined categorically.

The plausibility of this interpretation is brought out by a comparison with the Arunta. Here we have the same division into two phratries and of each phratry into clans (we may disregard the classes for the present); but, for reasons into which we need not now enter, some of the clans occur in both phratries. Suppose this applies to clan  $x$ . What is the result? A man of clan  $x$ , phratry A, may now marry a woman of clan  $x$ , phratry B, for she belongs to the phratry into which clan  $x$  may marry, and the fact that she also belongs to his own clan ( $x$ ) does not seem to alter matters in the least.<sup>1</sup>

Similar problems arise with tribes of complex organization and not "anomalous," like the Arunta.

Let the Kamilaroi represent the group of tribes with phratries, totem clans, and four matrimonial classes. The two phratries, Dilbi (I) and Kupathin (II), comprise a number of totem clans: (a, b, c in I, and d, e, f in II; for purposes of the diagram three clans in each phratry are assumed). Phratry I also contains the classes Murri ( $M$ ) and Kubbi ( $Ki$ ); phratry II, the classes Ipai ( $I$ ) and Kumbo ( $Ko$ ). Thus:



$Ki$  must marry  $I$ ,  $M$  must marry  $Ko$ , and vice versa. Here the clans ( $a$  or  $c$  or  $f$ , etc.), far from constituting positively exogamous units, are not even homogeneous in composition with reference to exogamy, for each clan contains two sets of members ( $a^1$  and  $a^2$ ,  $c^1$  and  $c^2$ , etc.),

<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen's own statements support the interpretation here given, even though they do not formally commit themselves to it. Among the Kaitish, they write, "we find the totems divided to a large extent between the two moieties of the tribe, so that it is a very rare thing for a man to marry a woman of the same totem as himself" (Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 175). Among the Warramunga and the tribes farther north the clans are strictly distributed between the phratries. "It follows" that "a man must marry a woman of a different totem to his own," and that "a man never marries a woman of his own totem" (ibid., pp. 164, 166). Among the Arunta, on the other hand, "no totem is at the present day confined to either moiety of the tribe," and "the totems in no way regulate marriage" (*Native Tribes*, pp. 120-1; cf. also Lang: *Social Origins*, p. 80). Obviously, the exogamy of the clan is determined by its relation to the phratry; it is not exogamous as a clan, but as a part of a wider group to which marriage within its own limits is forbidden. But Spencer and Gillen do not draw this inference.



the matrimonial obligations of each set being different. Nor do the members of each clan who belong to one class ( $a^1$  or  $c^2$  or  $e^1$ , etc.) constitute a positively exogamous unit, for here the Dieri argument applies: each such group stands in the same relation to the class as a whole as the Dieri clan stands to its phratry; and as with the Dieri the phratry, so here the class ( $M$ ,  $Ko$ , etc.) is the positively exogamous unit. As to the Kamilaroi phratry, class, or clan, as negatively exogamous units, this can be said: the classes certainly are negatively exogamous (no matrimony in your own class!), this being implied in their positive exogamy. Whether this is also true psychologically is another question. A man of  $M$  may not marry  $M$  nor  $Ki$  nor  $I$ . Suppose, breaking the rule, he does. He might then marry a woman of  $M$  or  $Ki$  or  $I$ . Is the transgression in these three cases equivalent or not? Presumably it is not. Suppose, then, that  $M$ 's marrying  $I$  is bad,  $M$ 's marrying  $Ki$  is worse, and  $M$ 's marrying  $M$  altogether despicable. The conclusion would be that the phratry functions as a negatively exogamous unit, and that the class functions similarly. For, marrying  $I$ ,  $Ki$ , or  $M$  is all the same in so far as it is *not* marrying  $Ko$  (which is the prescribed marriage class). But,  $M$  marrying  $I$  is right as to phratry, but not as to class;  $M$  marrying  $Ki$  is wrong as to phratry and class, but it is, at least, *outside* of one's own class;  $M$  marrying  $M$  is wrong from all angles. The same argument would apply to the clan.

Whether the distinctions here implied are actually drawn by the natives we do not know. But we should, if the social situation among these tribes is to be fully understood.<sup>1</sup>

A similar argument applies to the tribes with eight matrimonial subclasses. Here the totemic clans form an aggregate of four matrimonially heterogeneous units. The subclass is the exogamous unit; while the function of the phratry, and here also that of the class, ought to be investigated with the purpose of ascertaining their exact character with reference to exogamy.

It appears from the above discussion that the relation of the Australian totemic clan to exogamy is complex, except perhaps among tribes like the Urabunna. In the last mentioned group of tribes each

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<sup>1</sup> One way of ascertaining this would be to determine the relative frequency with which the prohibitions are violated, as well as the relative severity of the punishments imposed.

Theoretically, the exogamous relation I/II may be, both in its positive and its negative aspect, as strong as the relation  $M/Ko$  (or  $Ki/I$ ); or either of the two relations may tend to supersede the other. The second supposition, in favour of the class, is, however, more likely to correspond to the actual conditions. For in tribes organized like the Kamilaroi we no longer find any solidarity in the phratry, with reference to exogamy: each phratry comprises two sets of individuals, with different matrimonial rights and obligations.

clan of one phratry must marry one particular clan of the other. Here, then, we have for once pure (as contrasted with indirect or derived) totemic clan exogamy, both negative and positive.

The necessity of ascertaining the exact attitude of the natives towards all matrimonial regulations, negative as well as positive, may perhaps be emphasized by the following juxtaposition. Take again the Kamilaroi. Let us now represent the classes simply as A, B, C, and D. Thus:

phratries.....	I		II
classes.....	A	B	C D

Man A marries woman D, children are C; man C marries woman B, children are A; man D marries woman A, children are B; man B marries woman C, children are D. Thus:

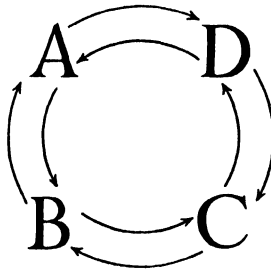


FIGURE 1

But suppose that the Kamilaroi organization is being described by an investigator who is particularly interested in the phenomenon of endogamy. Suppose, further, that he came to the Kamilaroi without previous acquaintance with other Australian tribes. He might represent the Kamilaroi organization as follows:

endogamous groups.....	I		II
classes.....	A	D	B C

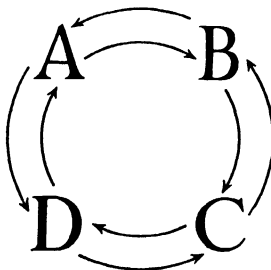


FIGURE 2

Two endogamous groups, I and II; endogamous group I comprises the two exogamous and intermarrying classes A and D; endogamous

group II, the two exogamous and intermarrying classes B and C (Fig. 1). A marries D, children are C; C marries B, children are A; D marries A, children are B; B marries C, children are D (Fig. 2).

The second mode of representation fits the objective facts as accurately as does the first.<sup>1</sup> The phratry names, Dilbi and Kupathin, would rather suggest the first representation as the true one, among the Kamilaroi; but in other tribes of the same type of organization but without phratric names this one clew would be missing. If, then, a choice were to be made between the exogamic and the endogamic interpretations, a psychological analysis of the native attitude would prove the only trustworthy method of ascertaining the truth.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable, moreover, that, on a par with the dominant phratric organization, there may also exist in these Australian tribes a consciousness of the objectively endogamous groups constituted by the pairs of intermarrying classes. (Cf. here Radcliffe-Brown's discussion of Australian social organization, in *Oceania*, Vol. I.)

<sup>2</sup> A number of weeks after the above lines were first written (1910), I ran across Klaatsch's exposition of the social organization of the Niol-Niol, north-western Australia ("Schlussbericht über meine Reise nach Australien in den Jahren 1904-1907," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XXXIX, 1907, pp. 656-7). On my previous reading of his account I had failed to observe that he had unwittingly impersonated our hypothetical investigator. Professor Klaatsch, a *homo novus* in Australian ethnology, found among the Niol-Niol two groups, each containing two subgroups. Group A, the name of which he heard as Paddjabor, contains the subgroups Pardiara and Karimb; group B, for which he heard the name Waddibol, contains the subgroups Borong and Panak. Pardiara marries Karimb, and vice versa; Borong marries Panak, and vice versa. Klaatsch does not use the terms "endogamy" and "exogamy"; as a matter of fact, however, he gives us two endogamous groups, each containing two exogamous ones.

Klaatsch proceeds to compare the class names of the Niol-Niol with those of the Arunta:

<i>Niol-Niol</i>	<i>Arunta</i>
Karimb (Kymera)	Kumara
Panak (Banake)	Panunga
Pardiara (Palljaru)	Bulthara
Borong (Burong)	Purula

While the phonetic correspondence is not absolute ("*allerdings bestehen ja im Klang einige Unterschiede*") very probably the classes do correspond.

Let	Panunga = Panak	= I
	Bulthara = Pardiara	= II
	Purula = Borong	= III
	Kumara = Karimb	= IV

The organizations of the two tribes can then be represented as follows:

<i>Arunta</i>		<i>Niol-Niol</i>
phratries		endogamous groups
A = $\begin{array}{ c c } \hline \text{I} \\ \hline \text{+} \\ \hline \text{II} \\ \hline \end{array}$ $\begin{array}{ c c } \hline \text{III} \\ \hline \text{+} \\ \hline \text{IV} \\ \hline \end{array}$ = B		$\begin{array}{ c } \hline \text{I + III} \\ \hline \end{array}$ = Paddjabor
		$\begin{array}{ c } \hline \text{II + IV} \\ \hline \end{array}$ = Waddibol
I marries III		I marries III
II " IV		II " IV

*The Tendency to Regulate Marriage.*—Much evidence can be adduced to show that even in those communities where marriage regulations of one kind or another have assumed a relatively fixed form, forces remain at work which tend to further modify or extend the regulation of marriage. Thus among the Meithei, for instance, Hodson records that certain *salais* do not intermarry with certain other *salais*. The Kumul do not intermarry with the Luang; the Moirang, with the Khabananba and the Ckenglei; while no Angom may take a wife among either the Luang, the Moirang, or the Khabananba, and vice versa.<sup>1</sup> Similarly among the Khasis the Diengdoh may not intermarry with the Maser; the Kharbangar, with the Nonglwai; the Khongdup, with the Rongsai and Khongru, etc.<sup>2</sup> Rivers notes that among the Todas certain clans in both divisions tend to intermarry with certain particular clans, and avoid others. Thus, in the Tartharol division, the Panol are not allowed to marry the Kanodrsol; the prohibition must be stringent, as not a single case of intermarriage between the two clans could be found in the genealogical records. The Piedr of the Teivaliol division do not intermarry with the Kusharf and the Pedrkarsol. The Nodrs, Kars, and Taradr, on the other hand, neighbouring clans inhabiting a hilly district, show a tendency to intermarry; and the same is true of the Kanodrs, Kwodrdoni, and Päm.<sup>3</sup> Hollis records a large number of similar regulations among the Nandi clans. Here the Kimpamwi and Kipkokos may not intermarry with the Tungo; the Kipaa, with the Kamwaika; and the Tungo are debarred from intermarriage with no less than six clans.<sup>4</sup> In this book *The Akikuyu of British East Africa* Routledge speaks of thirteen exogamous clans. Descent is paternal, but marriage into the mother's clan is also prohibited. In addition, however, "there are said to be certain other restrictions as to marriage between par-

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Among the Arunta the intermarrying classes—I and III, II and IV—belong to opposite phratries; among the Niol-Niol they constitute endogamous groups. But organizations like that represented in the diagram to the right, with a dichotomous endogamous division as a central feature, have not hitherto been found in Australia. The correspondence of the class names, moreover, suggests an organization essentially similar to that of the Arunta. Hence there can be little doubt that no such endogamous social units as Paddjabor and Waddibol really exist among the Niol-Niol; instead, I-II and III-IV probably constitute exogamous phratries. But what of the names "Paddjabor" and "Waddibol"? Perhaps the explanation would come with their meaning. (Cf., however, Radcliffe-Brown, loc. cit.)

<sup>1</sup> Hodson: *The Meithei*, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Gurdon: *The Khasis*, p. 76, and Appendices A and B, pp. 216-20.

<sup>3</sup> Rivers: *The Todas*, pp. 506-7.

<sup>4</sup> Hollis: *The Nandi*, pp. 8-11.

ticular clans which cannot be broken without penalty of barrenness."<sup>1</sup> Among the Haida "certain special families and towns were in the habit of intermarrying. This fact was expressed in saying that such and such a family were the 'fathers' of such and such another one."<sup>2</sup> Among the Winnebago Indians one of the clans of the Upper phratry tends to intermarry with one of the Lower clans.<sup>3</sup> In Australia, as shown above, marriage is as a rule regulated by phratries, classes, and subclasses, but not by individual clans. Exceptions are not lacking, however. Among the Urabunna, as we saw, there seems to be clan-to-clan marriage: a Matthurie-Dingo man marries a Kirarawa-Waterhen woman, a Kirarawa-Pelican man marries a Matthurie-Swan woman.<sup>4</sup> In the Wiradjuri tribe similar conditions prevail, except that in some clans the marriage restriction is not so narrow: a Yibatha-Opossum, for instance, may marry either a Kubbi-Bush-rat or a Kubbi-Bandicoot; an Yibai-Opossum may marry either a Kubbitha-Bush-rat or a Kubbitha-Flying-squirrel, etc.<sup>5</sup> Other deviations from the common phratry- (class-, subclass-) to-phratry- (class-, subclass-) law are recorded among the Wonghibon,<sup>6</sup> Kuinmurbura,<sup>7</sup> and Wakelbura;<sup>8</sup> also among the Karamundi and Itchimundi.<sup>9</sup>

Further research is needed to determine conclusively whether Howitt was right in asserting that "the restriction in marriage to one or more totems is certainly later in origin than the Dieri rule."<sup>10</sup> It is at least probable that such is the fact, in which case we should have to class these Australian tribes with other tribes of other continents, only that in Australia these positive restrictions on marriage, super-added upon the other more characteristic restrictions, have assumed a relatively fixed and categorical form.

The above illustrations come from regions selected at random.

<sup>1</sup> Routledge: *The Akikuyu*, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Swanton: *Haida*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication from Dr. Paul Radin.

<sup>4</sup> Howitt, op. cit., pp. 188-9.

<sup>5</sup> Howitt, op. cit., p. 209. Howitt's remark with reference to these regulations evinces considerable naïveté: "A statement made by one of my Wiradjuri informants," he writes, "is worth recording, as showing that all the restrictions or enlargements of privileges are the result of thought. He said 'Kubbi-guro (bush-rat) and Kubbi-butherung (flying-squirrel) can each marry Yibatha-gurimul (opossum), because they are very near to each other in the Kubbi-budjan' (that is, subclass)."

<sup>6</sup> Cameron, quoted by Howitt, op. cit., pp. 214-15.

<sup>7</sup> Flowers, *ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>8</sup> Muirhead, *ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>9</sup> Howitt, op. cit., pp. 189, 194.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

Hence we may safely assume that more intensive study by means of the genealogical method will reveal the fact that the tendency to regulate marriage plays a conspicuous part in the social customs of primitive communities.<sup>1</sup>

*Some Origins.*—To identify marriage restrictions is one thing; to interpret them causally, another. Nothing short of a historical record will enable us to discern a "cause" in any particular case, but the variety of possible causes must be admitted to be well-nigh infinite. Here and there tradition furnishes a suggestion. The Meitheiis *salais* Kumul and Luang, for example, do not intermarry because "once upon a time a Kumul Wazir saved the life of a Luang who had been sentenced to death."<sup>2</sup> In examining the genealogical records of the Todas, Rivers failed to find a single case of marriage between the Panol and the Kanodrsol clans; the prohibition is said to be due to the murder of Parden by Kwoten.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the clans Piedr and Pedrkarsol ceased intermarrying on account of a quarrel between the members of the two clans. These accounts are traditional, and the incidents thus hypothesized might, in the particular cases, prove pure fiction; there is, however, nothing inherently impossible, or even improbable, in these native theories.

Two historical cases are worth mentioning. One refers to the development of endogamy in a Pacific coast tribe—the Bella Coola. Historical, archæological, and linguistic evidence leaves no room for doubt that these people originally lived around Dean Inlet. When they migrated northward, they came under the influence of the northern coast tribes. Thus they came to ascribe vast importance to their clan traditions. Thenceforth something had to be done to prevent other villages from acquiring the traditions, which would then lose much of their value. The prohibition of marriage outside the village

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<sup>1</sup> We may add to this that the regulation of marriage has functioned both as a reflector and as an instrument of group formation at all times in history. And it continues in this double rôle. Prerogatives of descent, of social position, faith, and occupation, ever tend to check intermarriage beyond the limits of certain racial, religious, social, professional groups. Opposite tendencies are not lacking: witness the predilection of European noblemen, or their sons, for the daughters of American millionaires—a predilection which is reciprocated. Amidst the complexities of our civilization these tendencies are checked by innumerable disturbing currents and counter-currents. But at the proper time and place many of these tendencies may and, in point of history, did produce rigid forms of social organization backed by categorical imperatives against the marriage within or without certain definite groups.

<sup>2</sup> Hodson, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Rivers: *The Todas*, p. 506.

was an efficient means; hence endogamy developed. "It seems, however," adds Boas, "that, owing to the influence of the coast tribes, the endogamic system has begun to give way to an exogamic system. Powerful and wealthy chiefs marry outside of their own village community, in order to secure an additional clan legend through marriage."<sup>1</sup>

The other case takes us back to the Todas. The division of a tribe into two exogamous groups is, as we saw, a widespread form of primitive organization. The theories most commonly advanced to account for this condition hypothesize either the splitting in two of an originally "undivided commune," or the fusion of two originally independent groups. Now, this is what actually occurred in the Teivaliol section of the Todas: the people of the Kundr clan, owing to their numerical superiority, could follow the exogamous law only by marrying most of the members of the other clans, "leaving very few to intermarry with one another." During the period investigated by Rivers, only 16 out of 177 marriages belonged to the latter type. Thus "the Teivaliol division has almost come to be in the position of a community with a dual marrying organization, in which every member of one group must marry a member of the other group."<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the causes referred to above, I must mention another factor which may further the spread of specific arrangements for the regulation of marriage. I mean borrowing, the influence exerted by one tribe on another. In Australia the vast amount of borrowing which must have taken place is attested to by the occurrence of identical class and phratry organizations over tremendous areas, as well as by the use of similar or identical class and phratry names in many groups of tribes. In north-west America the maternal clan organization, with its exogamy, was carried by the coast tribes to those of the interior.<sup>3</sup> In India the exogamous *gotras* of the Brahman castes were adopted by tribes originally organized on a different basis. And so on.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Bella Coola*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Rivers: *The Todas*, p. 507.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 319 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Risley: *Census of India* (1901), p. 177, and elsewhere. In most general terms, the origin of exogamy or endogamy may, perhaps, be visualized as follows: Take a tribe, or, for convenience, two tribes, in contact. The only three possibilities in the line of marriage relations are: indifference (the two tribes marry indiscriminately), exogamous tendency (each tribe tends to marry into the other rather than within itself), or endogamous tendency (each tribe tends to marry within its own limits). Of these alternatives the first need not be seriously considered. It cannot last. Sooner or later some one of the possible causes or accidents will break the equilibrium and tip the scale one way or the other. The institution of marriage is of such vast economic

*The Regulation of Marriage and Psychic Intercourse.* — Among the Gilyak, grandfathers and grandmothers,<sup>1</sup> fathers and mothers, agnatic and cognatic uncles and aunts, may not intermarry with their grandchildren, children, nephews, and nieces. Brother-and-sister marriage — own and collateral — is similarly prohibited. Of cousins, a woman's daughter may not marry that woman's brother's son, etc. A woman's son, on the other hand, and that woman's brother's sister belong to the class of rightful "husbands" and "wives" (*pu* and *angej*).

Men and women who are unrelated may intermarry or have sexual intercourse at will. Here there is no "right" or "wrong." The community neither opposes nor sanctions the behaviour of such persons; they may take care of themselves or of their possible rivals as they see fit. Not so with the classes of *pu* and *angej*; here the right to sexual intercourse and marriage often involves positive obligations. In some localities a man (or woman) may not refuse sexual intercourse to a person who rightfully demands it. More commonly, widows become the wives of their husbands' surviving brothers, "quite independently of the latter's sentiments in the matter." That marriage between the groups *pu* and *angej* is not merely appropriate but imperative, is well illustrated in a tradition recorded by Sternberg. A young Gilyak, mortally wounded in a fight with a mysterious shaman, retires to his tent. While on his death-bed he realizes that he belongs to a gens into which the murderer may marry, and that his daughter is the murderer's rightful wife (*angej*). The shaman, to whose person a murderer's curse now attaches, is summoned; and in his presence the dying Gilyak declares: "Although this man killed me, give him my daughter! Remember my word!"

As a man must marry one of his *angej*, care is taken not to leave the matter to chance; thus marriages are often agreed upon by the parents

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and social importance that any tendency—exogamous or endogamous—thus originated is bound to be seized upon. The tendency grows into a habit, while the opposite course becomes exceptional. Public opinion comes into play; religious sanction supervenes. Thus the habit becomes an imperative, the infringement, a taboo. Specific historical conditions may at any given place and time foster, retard, or check processes like the one suggested; but the point remains that marital tendencies of one or another sort will develop—history alone can answer the why in each particular instance—and once there, will tend to assert themselves. Beyond this we cannot go. It is easy to speculate about the origin of exogamy (or endogamy) on general sociological, psychological, or physiological grounds. Any number of possible developments may be guessed at, and in a given case one or more may seem plausible or even probable. But in the absence of a historical backbone the objective value of such speculations is nil.

<sup>1</sup> These terms of relationship apply, not to individuals, but to groups.



soon after the births of the future couple. At the age of four or five the bride joins the family of her bridegroom. The children grow up together, calling each other "my husband" and "my wife." When sexual maturity is reached, they become *de facto* husband and wife, no special ceremony being required to sanction this last act which marks their marital union. The insignificant part played by the purchase-money (*kalym*) in marriages of the above type is particularly interesting. The purchase-money received by the bride's father or brother is, as a rule, a very important factor in the marriage transaction; but in marriages of the above type the purchase-money recedes to the background. If not quite eliminated, it either is paid in small yearly instalments or is put off for decades, until the couple are in a position to reimburse themselves by means of the purchase-money received for their own female progeny. In view of the great economic importance of the purchase-money in the Gilyak household, its reduction or elimination in the child marriages of *pu* and *anjej* becomes particularly significant. Such marriages seem to constitute, in the eyes of the Gilyak, part of the natural order of things.

There is among the Gilyak of today no prohibition against sexual intercourse with strangers, although a number of customs make it probable that such prohibitions existed in the past. Sexual intimacy between persons of prohibited degrees, however, continues to elicit public condemnation and rebukes by relatives, accompanied by expulsion from the community. Suicide of the culprit, rather prompted than discouraged by relatives, is of common occurrence.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Among most Australian tribes group resentment against incestuous marriages of any type manifests itself in much more extreme and violent forms. Some examples may not be amiss. If a Kamilaroi man took to wife a woman prohibited by tribal law, her kindred would complain to the people of the man's local division, who "were bound to take the matter up." Unless they did so, "a fight would be sure to arise between members of the two subclasses concerned. In some cases, however, if a man persisted in keeping as his wife a woman of a prohibited subclass, "he was driven out of the company of his friends. If that did not induce him to leave the woman, his male kindred followed him and killed him. The female kindred of the woman also killed her" (Doyle, in Howitt, op. cit., p. 208). If a Wakelbura man ran away with a woman of a wrong totem clan, his own and tribal brothers turned against him, as well as the brothers, own and tribal, of the woman and those of the man she should properly have married. He had to fight all of them, as well as the slighted man. If the latter was a strong fighting man, he would follow the offender to his camp. "The mother of the woman would cut, and perhaps kill her, and the man's own brothers would challenge him to fight them, by throwing boomerangs and other weapons about him." If he refused to fight, they turned on the woman, who would then be crippled or killed. Then the slighted man would fight the offender, who "in such a fight would be sure to come off worst, for even if he proved to be a better man than his antagonist, the brothers of the latter, or even his own brothers, would attack him and he would be probably gashed with their knives, since his own brothers would not mind if they killed him, for under such circumstances his death would not be avenged" (Howitt, op. cit., pp. 222-3).

Now, on a par with these positive and negative regulations of marriage, there exist among the Gilyak certain other regulations of what Sternberg calls "psychic intercourse." Interdicts of psychic intercourse refer, on the one hand, to those individuals between whom outbursts of jealousy are most likely to occur, and, on the other hand, to the groups of persons who may not intermarry. To the former category belong the several wives of a man, as well as the wives of "brothers." Between all these persons occasions for jealousy constantly arise; hence the interdict of psychic intercourse applies to them in all its stringency: no familiarity is tolerated, nor are they permitted to speak to each other. In case of necessity only may such a one be addressed, the third person being used. To the second category belong, in the first place, all *tuvn* (brothers and sisters, own and collateral). Such "brothers" and "sisters" may not even look at each other.<sup>1</sup> The interdict is as strict with reference to all women of one's own gens, while the interdict between *tuvn* extends even to persons beyond the limits of the gens,

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In one case related by Howitt, an old man of the Kulin tribe "had a grown-up son, and a girl lived with them who was in the relation of daughter to the old man, and therefore in the relation of sister to his son. The man's friends told him to get the girl married, because it was not right to have her living single in the same camp with his son. He did not do this, and his son took the girl. Then the old man was very angry, and said, 'I am ashamed; every one will hear of this; why have you done this thing? I have done with you altogether.' Then he speared his son, who died soon after" (Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-6). The resentment and punishment are milder when the culprits do not belong to prohibited groups. If a Wotjo man ran away with a girl who was promised to another man, "all the girl's male kindred, both paternal and maternal, followed the couple, and if they found them, brought them back with them. The man had then to stand out and fight her male kindred. . . . If skilful, he probably remained uninjured. The girl when brought back was beaten by her father and brothers, as also by her mother and sisters, against all of whom she defended herself as best she could with a digging stick. After this ordeal, the man was permitted to keep her, but he had to find a sister to give in exchange for her." If, on the other hand, a man ran away with a girl whom he could not rightfully marry, relates Howitt, "all the men of both [classes] would pursue him, and if he were caught they would kill and bury him. My Wotjobaluk informants said that this was always done in the old times before white men came; but that they did not do as their western neighbours did, namely, eat him. It was the duty of the woman's father and brothers, in such a case, to kill her" (Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-7).

<sup>1</sup> The prohibition of sexual intercourse between brothers and sisters—a prohibition of which the above psychic interdict is a reflection—is extended by the Gilyak beyond the human species. If a dog is caught in an incestuous act, an expiatory sacrifice of the culprit is required by custom.

A custom recorded among the natives of New Britain may serve as an extreme illustration of the "horror of incest." Among these people, "if twins are born, and they are boy and girl, they are put to death, because being of the same class, and being of opposite sexes, they were supposed to have had in the womb a closeness of connection which amounted to a violation of their marital class law" (Danks: "Marriage Customs of the New Britain Group," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XVIII, 1899). This instinct is one of the puzzles of ethnology. Its origin we know not. As we find it today, it is not restricted to cases of actual nearness of blood, but attaches itself to groups of most varying composition. In any individual case marriage regulations, of whatever specific origin, cannot be properly understood without due regard to this powerful sentiment which constitutes their emotional background.

such as the children of sisters married to men belonging to different gentes. Curiously enough, there is no interdict between "mothers" and "sons." Sternberg suggests that the terms of relationship as used from childhood on serve as a sufficient guaranty of sexual indifference between these persons. There is somewhat less freedom between "fathers" and "daughters": conversation and quarrelling is permitted, but no familiarity. There is no interdict between a man and his mother-in-law, while the relations of a woman with her father-in-law are restricted to a greater or less extent in the various localities.<sup>1</sup> The positive marriage regulations are similarly reflected in the rules of psychic intercourse. While the "husbands" among themselves, and the "wives" likewise, stand under the ban of strict interdicts, the relations between the two groups are of the freest: they are natural playmates and companions. Young men unite in groups and spend entire months in the gentes of their "fathers-in-law" (*axmalk*), in the company of their *angej*. The relations between brothers-in-law are characterized by the same freedom and cordiality. None of these groups, however, are as conspicuous for the friendliness and familiarity of their relations as are the groups of "fathers-in-law" (*axmalk*) and "sons-in-law" (*ymgi*). A "son-in-law" is an ever-welcome guest; the best in the house is put before him; he participates in his host's hunting and carries away with him a large share of the booty; at ceremonies one of the honourable functions is assigned to him; in times of need he may join his father-in-law, accompanied by his entire family, and for months live at the former's house and at his expense.

The above conditions, as found among the Gilyak, illustrate with great clearness the close correlation between the positive and negative regulations of marriage to which I have repeatedly referred; they also illustrate the unmistakable correspondence between the regulations of marriage, on the one hand, and the rules of psychic intercourse, on the other.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In Sternberg's opinion, this may be due to the fact that a woman among the Gilyak lives with her husband's parents, while a man sees but little of his mother-in-law.

<sup>2</sup> The facts on the Gilyak are derived from Sternberg (MS.). In works dealing with marriage regulations we generally find much care bestowed on the elucidation of restrictions and interdicts, while positive regulations are comparatively neglected. The latter, however, are no less important than the former, and a survey of the two sets of regulations is indispensable for a clear understanding of the marital situation in any given community. The rules of psychic intercourse, which only too often have prompted speculations along mystic lines, are intimately correlated with the two sets of matrimonial regulations; so the latter must ever be kept in mind if we want to grasp the full bearing of the former.

## TOTEMIC NAMES

The totemic group does not always bear the name of its totem. The North-West furnished some instances. Further examples from North America may now be adduced.

Among the Omaha the name of the Elk gens is Wejincte. The meaning of this word is forgotten, but it does not seem to have any relation to the elk.<sup>1</sup> The Black-shoulder gens has the buffalo as its totem, but its name is not derived from that animal.<sup>2</sup> Nor are the names of the three sub-gentes of this gens derived from their totems; the name Wadigije, for instance, is derived from the "hooped rope" with which one of the native games is played.<sup>3</sup> Another of the Omaha Buffalo gentes bears the name Hanga ("foremost," "ancestral"). Among the Kansas and Osages the same name applies to gentes with other totems. The two sub-gentes of the Omaha Hanga bear two names each, one referring to their taboos, the other to their ceremonial functions.<sup>4</sup> One of the sub-gentes of the Catada gens bears the name "Those-who-do-not-touch-the-skin-of-a-Black-Bear"; another sub-gens is called "Those-who-do-not-eat-(small) Birds";<sup>5</sup> etc. The Mandinka-gaxe is a wolf gens. "The members of this gens call themselves the Wolf (and Prairie wolf) People," but their name means "the Earth-lodge Makers."<sup>6</sup> The Ictasanda are the Reptile people. The meaning of the name is uncertain, but it may be "Grey Eyes."<sup>7</sup>

In Africa, the Bahima, a Bantu tribe of the Uganda Protectorate, comprise fourteen totemic clans. One of the totems is a monkey (it is monopolized by the princes); eleven are different varieties of cows; one is "twins"; and one, the human breast. Descent is paternal. The names of these exogamous clans are not derived from their totems.<sup>8</sup> The Nandi clans do not (with some exceptions) derive their names from their totems.<sup>9</sup> The Kiziba, on the western shore of Lake Victoria Nyanza, comprise, besides the king's family, twenty-seven families

<sup>1</sup> Dorsey: "Omaha Sociology," *3d Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 228-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230-1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 236-8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

<sup>8</sup> Roscoe: "The Bahima," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXVII (1907), p. 99.

<sup>9</sup> Hollis, *op. cit.*, p. 5, and Appendix II, p. 317.

or clans with paternal descent. The clans are exogamous, and each has its totem. "Cross"-totems are conspicuous, such as "the heart of all animals," "the intestines of all animals," etc. The clans do not bear the names of their totems.<sup>1</sup> The tribes occupying the region between the Upper Congo and the Upper Nile, such as the Bangba, Azande, Abarambo, etc., are divided into exogamous clans with paternal descent. The clans have their totem animals or plants, the killing and eating of which is generally prohibited. The names of the clans are not those of their totems.<sup>2</sup>

The Bhils of Barwani (India) are divided into forty-one exogamous septs, with their totems and taboos. Not all of the totems are eponymous. Here "septs with different names, but whose object of special worship is the same, cannot intermarry."<sup>3</sup>

On Kiriwina Island (Trobriand group) each of the four exogamous divisions has four totems, differing in rank. The divisions trace their descent from the bird totem which ranks highest, but they do not take the name of any of the totems.<sup>4</sup> The two classes of the New Britain group claim two insects as their totems, but bear the names of two mythological ancestors who are believed to have descended from the totems.<sup>5</sup>

The above instances notwithstanding, eponymous totems must be recognized as one of the more persistent features of totemic groups, particularly of those with maternal descent. One factor, however, tends to exaggerate, in the eyes of investigators, the importance of totemic names. I mean the great vitality of names. Special attitudes and beliefs will disappear or become modified beyond recognition; even taboos which furnish plentiful "survivals," are very unreliable for purposes of reconstruction. Names, on the other hand, whether of families, clans, or still wider groups, cling to these units with remarkable tenacity. We must admit the common prevalence of totemic names wherever totemic phenomena exist, as well as the numerous cases where, in the absence of other features, only the names are extant; while the reverse is of rare occurrence. But we must also remember that these facts may, at least in part, be due to the greater tenacity of names. Who knows how many totemic communities with-

<sup>1</sup> Rehse: *Kiziba* (1910), pp. 4-7.

<sup>2</sup> Czekanowski, in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1909, p. 598.

<sup>3</sup> Risley, op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>4</sup> Rivers: "Totemism in Polynesia and Melanesia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXIX (1909), p. 179.

<sup>5</sup> Danks, loc. cit., p. 281.

out totemic names may have existed and vanished, leaving behind no trace for the ethnologist to build upon?<sup>1</sup>

#### DESCENT FROM THE TOTEM

We found that among all but the southernmost tribes of the Pacific coast the concept of descent from the totem did not occur. Nor did the Iroquois tribes trace their descent from the eponymous clan animals.

Passing now to Africa, we note that the totems of the Kiziba stood in an intimate relation to their system of taboos, but they were not the ancestors of the clansmen. The reason given by the natives for having a particular animal or plant for their totem was that the latter had either benefited them in the past or had done them some harm.<sup>2</sup> The Baganda are divided into clans with totems and animal names. The natives do not trace their descent from these totems. "The only origin they have of the totems," says Roscoe, "is that one of their forefathers partook of that animal or bird, etc., and fell ill; and from that time it was looked upon as injurious to them, and they took it as their totem."<sup>3</sup> The same is true of the Bahima.<sup>4</sup>

The Bamangwato tribe of the Becwana account for having the duyker as their totem by the following tradition: "The original ancestor of the Bamangwato tribe, Nwato by name (Nwato means the undercut of a sirloin of beef), was once hard-pressed by his foes. In his extremity he hid in a thicket. His pursuers had seen him but a little while before, and as he was now nowhere to be seen, they surmised that he must be in hiding; and they approached the very thicket, intending to examine it. Just as they approached, however, a duyker sprang out and bounded away. Upon this, one of them remarked that a man and a duyker could not hide in the same thicket, and the party went on. Henceforth, says the story, the chief took the duyker for his totem."

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<sup>1</sup> It may be added to this section that the tendency to give or assume animal or other such names is in no sense to be identified with totemism. We say that eponymous totems are common but not universal in totemic communities. But, on the other hand, animal and kindred names have been associated at all times with individuals, societies, localities, clubs, game-teams, streets, hostelries, constellations, and what not. The appearance of such designations in totemism is only one phase of a much more sweeping tendency.

<sup>2</sup> Rehse, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Roscoe: "Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXI (1901), pp. 118-19.

<sup>4</sup> Roscoe, *ibid.*, Vol. XXXVII (1907), p. 99.

A section of the Bahurutshe, whose totems are the eland and the hartebeest, also claim the baboon as their totem. They have this tradition: "A certain chief of the Bahurutshe tribe captured a young baboon and tamed it. One day his son loosed the baboon to play with it, and allowed it to escape. There had already been much friction between the son and the father, and this was the climax. The father gave the son a sound thrashing. The son promptly retaliated by seceding, and calling upon his followers to follow him. They formed a township of their own and adopted the baboon as their totem."

Another section of the Bahurutshe, besides sharing the tribal totem, claim the wild boar as their subsidiary totem, for the following reason: "The chief, Makgane, was childless; and almost despairing of a son, he called in a celebrated doctor from a neighboring tribe and asked him to cure his wife of her childlessness. The doctor venerated the wild boar. And having administered his medicines, he assured the chief that a son would be born, and ordered that the son and all his descendants should venerate the wild boar. The son was born, and the subsidiary totem was taken."<sup>1</sup>

Some of the minor subdivisions of the Garos (India) had their animal totems to which, however, they showed no respect whatever. A number of their family traditions are recorded by Playfair. Thus, the Rangsam family of the Marak clan recount that a bear once sold a basket of food to a Marak girl who married him. The girl's family killed the bear. Her issue have the bear for their totem and are called "Children of the Bear." According to the tradition of a family of the Momin clan, "a little girl was shut up naked in a shed by her mother because she was naughty. Being ashamed of her nakedness, she asked some children who were playing near by to give her some feathers, fire, and wax. By means of hot wax, she stuck the feathers all over her body, and, turning into a dove, was able to fly out. This girl became the founder of the dove family."<sup>2</sup> The people of Buin (Bougainville Island, Solomon group) are divided into exogamous classes which have birds as their totems. These totems are not the ancestors of the totemites, although the latter believe themselves to be in some way related to the former. Thus the Fish-hawk people say that the child of one of their women became transformed into a

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<sup>1</sup> Willoughby: "Notes on the Totemism of the Becwana," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXV (1905), pp. 300-1.

<sup>2</sup> Playfair: *The Garos*, p. 65.

fish-hawk. The Parrot people claim that a parrot child was born from a human mother and a parrot father, etc.<sup>1</sup>

These few examples will suffice to show that totems are not always conceived as the ancestors of totemic groups.<sup>2</sup>

### TABOO

*Taboo and the Other "Symptoms."* — Any survey of killing- and eating-prohibitions would reveal the fact that these customs are wider in range than the taboos of totemism. On all sides one encounters such prohibitions referring to pregnant or menstruating women or their husbands, to widows and widowers, to youths before initiation, and the like. The distribution of these customs is so general that we may dispense with concrete illustrations.

The prohibition to kill and eat the personal guardian animal is of common occurrence. It applies frequently to the manitou of the North American Indian, to the spirit protectors of the Banks Islands natives, to the Euahlayi *yunbeai*.<sup>3</sup>

In other cases there is no such prohibition attached to the personal guardian. The *sulia* of the Salish tribes furnish one instance. Among these people those who had as their protectors one or more of the animals hunted for food were always successful hunters of those animals. The man, for instance, who had a deer as protector could always find and kill plenty of deer; and it was the same with respect to the other animals, birds, and fish.<sup>4</sup> This set of customs is probably explicable by the spiritual character of *suliaism*. The *sulia* is a "mystery being" or "spirit." It may take the form of a deer, bear, or any other animal; but even though the animal is slain, the essence of the *sulia* remains intact.<sup>5</sup>

In totemic communities the taboo often reaches beyond the limits of a single totemic group. The wildcat taboo which extends to all the members of the Arunta tribe,<sup>6</sup> has already been referred to, as well

<sup>1</sup> Thurnwald: "Im Bismarkarchipel und auf den Salomoinseeln," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XLIII (1910), p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Here, once more, it is to be observed that the concept of animal descent, while no more than common in totemism, is, on the other hand, far wider in its distribution than is totemism. Abundant evidence of this will be found in the enormous collection of animal and suchlike cults brought together by N. W. Thomas in his article, "Animals," in Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.

<sup>3</sup> Parker: *The Euahlayi*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Hill-Tout: *Siciall*, p. 324.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 325.

<sup>6</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, pp. 167-8.



as the brown-hawk taboo, which applies to several other tribes in addition.<sup>1</sup> On Tikopia Island the octopus, particularly sacred to the Kavika division, is also taboo to the entire island. Of the four totems of the Tafua division, two — the flying-fox and the turtle — may not be eaten by either the Tafua or any of the other divisions. The same is true of the sting-ray.<sup>2</sup> On the Reif Islands several animals are taboo to everybody.<sup>3</sup> Elaborate food-taboos may be associated with definite social units which need not be totemic. The Indian castes are a case in point: the food-regulations so characteristic of the numerous castes and sub-castes of India are as strict as they are extravagant.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to restrictive taboos, there exist in many tribes positive regulations referring to the killing and eating of animals. When a wombat is killed among the Kurnai, relates Howitt, it is first cooked, then cut open and skinned. "The skin is cut into strips and divided with parts of the animal thus:—The head, to the person who killed the animal. To his father, the right rib; to his mother, the left rib and the backbone, which, with some of the skin, she gives to her parents. Her husband's parents receive some of the skin. The elder brother gets the right shoulder, the younger, the left; the elder sister, the right hind leg, the younger, the left hind leg; and the rump and liver are sent to the young men's camps."<sup>5</sup> Similar regulations apply to the preparation and apportionment of a native bear, the euro, lace-lizard, etc. The various hunting-regulations, which are well-nigh ubiquitous, also belong here. In the case of taboos, as in that of marriage regulations, forbidden things and acts must be studied in conjunction with acts and things prescribed, if the facts are to be seen in their proper perspective.

When viewed still more broadly, the natural affiliations of killing- and eating-taboos will be found to lie with other prohibitions restricting conduct. Van Gennep thus summarizes the function of taboo (*fady*) in Madagascar: "Taboo is one of the basic elements of the social and individual life of the inhabitants of Madagascar; it regulates the daily life of the craftsman, the noble, the chief, the family, the tribe itself; often it decides the parenthood of an individual, and determines the future mode of life of a new-born infant; it erects bar-

<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 612.

<sup>2</sup> Rivers: "Totemism in Melanesia and Polynesia," loc. cit., p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>4</sup> See Riskey, op. cit., pp. 84, 125, 186-7 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> Howitt, op. cit., p. 759.

riers between young people, and limits or necessitates the territorial extension of families; it regulates methods of work and strictly apporions the work to be done; it even prescribes the diet; it isolates the diseased, and separates the living from the dead; it stands guard over the power of the chief and the property of the rich; it watches over the cult of the great fetishes, perpetuates the form of ritualistic acts, the efficacy of remedies, and the potency of amulets." <sup>1</sup> Here the eating- and killing-restrictions, which are numerous, simply fall in with the rest of that elaborate system of reglementations sanctioned by the community. But what is true of Madagascar or Polynesia where taboo actually holds the community in its clutches, applies in a vaguer form to taboo in general. Being on its emotional side allied to the concepts of holy, sacred, powerful, for good or evil, hence beneficent or dangerous, <sup>2</sup> it is on its social side a system of regulations of conduct, with human or supernatural sanction.

While taboo extends far beyond its functions in totemic communities, the totem is not always an object to be abstained from. In tribes like the Iroquois, where the totem is nothing but a name, no prohibitions are attached to the living representatives of the eponym. We hear little of totemic taboos in India. Howitt found no totemic taboos in Victoria. <sup>3</sup> Among the Euahlayi who will not harm or eat their *yunbeai*, the totem animal may be freely killed and eaten. <sup>4</sup>

*Historical and Psychological Complexity of Taboo.* — Among the Omaha we find a set of curiously artificial taboos. The Eagle people are not allowed to touch a buffalo-head. <sup>5</sup> A sub-gens with a name meaning "to carry a turtle on one's back" is allowed to touch or carry a turtle but not to eat it. In the Buffalo-tail gens the Keepers-of-the-Pipe do not eat the lowest buffalo-rib, while the Keepers-of-the-Sweet-Medicine may not touch any calves. <sup>6</sup> The Wind people cannot touch verdigris, etc. <sup>7</sup> These taboos of the Omaha cannot be directly deduced

<sup>1</sup> Van Gennep: *Tabou et totémisme à Madagascar*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Marillier: "Tabou," in *La Grande Encyclopédie*, Vol. XXX, p. 848: "The Polynesian taboo designates the beings, objects, words, and acts which are sacred, and is the reverse of the word 'noa' which is applied to anything that may serve ordinary or common uses, anything that may be touched, seen, done, or said, freely." Hence he allies the taboo concept with the Indian *wakan*.

<sup>3</sup> Howitt, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>4</sup> Parker, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Dorsey, op. cit., p. 240.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 241.

from the attitude of the Indians towards their totems, nor would it be plausible to suppose that all of these fanciful prohibitions had a uniform origin. If the history of these and similar taboos were revealed, we should probably find a variety of incidents leading to specific prohibitions subsequently stereotyped.

Of the many taboos of the Eskimo, one set is of special interest. Among the Ponds Bay people, "at the place where her [Sedna's] tent stood, no one is allowed to burn heather, and no caribou-skin must be worked on this place during the winter; otherwise her husband, the dog, would be heard howling, and she would punish the offenders." At Itidlig "the people are allowed to work on caribou-skins until a whale, a narwhal, a white whale, or a ground-seal has been killed. After one of these animals has been killed, they must stop work on caribou-skins for three nights."<sup>1</sup> After a successful whaling season all clothing is discarded near the shore, so that in the deer-hunting season the deer may not be offended.<sup>2</sup> After the new caribou-skin clothing has been made for the winter, and when the men are ready to go sealing for the first time, all their clothing and hunting-implements are hung over a smudge made of dry seaweed. It is supposed that the smoke takes away the smell of the caribou, which would offend the sea-mammals.<sup>3</sup> It is believed that caribou are not so plentiful as formerly, because the Eskimos now use the timber brought to the country by the whalers, to engage in woodwork during the caribou-hunting season.<sup>4</sup> In all these customs is reflected the antagonism between the deer, on the one hand, and the sea-mammals, on the other. A plausible origin of these practices is suggested by Boas. As sea-mammals and deer are hunted at different seasons, it became habitual to dissociate the two sets of pursuits. The mental attitude thus established gave rise to the belief that any association between sea-mammals and deer, or between acts referring to these animals, such as eating, sewing, etc., was harmful and objectionable.<sup>5</sup>

The above instances bring home the fact that taboos, whether totemic or not, permit of a great variety of origins. In the course of time these origins become obscured. Then the temptation lies near

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay," *The American Museum of Natural History, Bulletin*, Vol. XV, Part 2 (1907), p. 493.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 500.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 502.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 503.

<sup>5</sup> Boas: "Psychological Problems in Anthropology," *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XXI (1910), reprint, pp. 11-12.

to interpret the surviving prohibitions through some simple psychological process, such as the totemite's respect for his totem. While in some totemic communities this may be the true derivation, the origin of the taboo may in as many cases have been a totally different one.

#### THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF TOTEMISM

*The Worship of Animals and Plants.*—That animal- and plant-worship is not coextensive with totemism is a proposition hardly requiring detailed demonstration. In the total mass of animal cults totemic beliefs occupy a comparatively modest place.<sup>1</sup>

The rather detailed information available on the worship of trees and snakes in India<sup>2</sup> discloses no connexion between these cults and any totemic features. The worship accorded to various animals in ancient Egypt is similarly devoid of any totemic colouring. We find there veneration of individual animals as well as of entire species, but in either case the animal seems to commend religious regard as the actual or potential dwelling-place of a god.<sup>3</sup>

It will not be amiss here to give one or two illustrations of curious animal cults from a different region. The Gilyak never kill killer-whales. If the body of one is washed ashore, it is decorated with *inau* and buried in a house of wooden boards erected for that special purpose.<sup>4</sup> The bear, as we shall see presently, although hunted, is treated with similar consideration. Great respect is also shown to other animals. When a seal is killed, its head, decorated with *inau*, is ceremoniously sunk into the ocean. The heads of white whales are stuck on poles erected on the shore; the heads of other animals are similarly treated.

The Gilyak have the interesting institution of gentile gods. When a clansman is killed by a bear or other animal, is drowned or burned, he becomes a little "master"; but he is believed to return to earth in the shape of some animal which thus becomes related to the gens.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Thomas: "Animals," Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. I, pp. 483-535.

<sup>2</sup> Crooke: *On the Worship of Trees and Snakes in India* (1896), pp. 94-7, 100, 106, 121 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wiedemann: *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, pp. 182, 185.

<sup>4</sup> Sternberg, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, Vol. VIII (1905), p. 252.

<sup>5</sup> Sternberg (*ibid.*, pp. 256-9) sees in these gentile animals a potential totemism. He believes that a typical form of totemism, with special animals for each gens, could not have developed among the Gilyak, for the reason that there are but few gentes which have not lost a kinsman, either contemporary or ancestral, in combat with a bear. He adds, however: "I only say that the origin of gentile gods among the Gilyak demonstrates that, totemism (that is, a belief in

Sternberg gives a detailed account of a Gilyak bear festival.<sup>1</sup> These festivals are on each occasion given by some one gens which acts as the host, while several other gentes are the guests. The bear is killed as part of the ceremony. Sternberg believes, however, that the procedure is not really a bear sacrifice, the things sacrificed being dogs, fish, tobacco, sugar, straps, arrows, etc., while the bear figures as a messenger to the great "Master." The guests of honour at these festivals are men from the gentes which take wives from the officiating gens. These men are, of course, the *ymgi* referred to before. They play a prominent part in the performance, for they alone are permitted to put the bear to death. They also receive the lion's share of the meat, while the host and his clansmen "are only permitted to eat a thick soup of rice or *buda*, mixed with bear meat gravy." In addition, however, the bear's head is also divided between them "with ceremonial respect." Here, then, among the Gilyak who have no totemism, we find a bear festival given by one gens, with others participating; and during the feast the meat of the animal is eaten mostly by members of the other gentes, while the host and his associates may eat only a little—the head, namely—but that they *must* eat (while the ghost of an Arunta *alatunja* looks on in sympathetic appreciation!)<sup>2</sup>

An elaborate whale festival is recorded among the Koryak. As one of the regular features of the festival, "women suffering from nervous fits confessed transgressions of various taboos committed by them, and were then comforted by one of the old men."<sup>3</sup> The Koryak believe that the killed whale has come on a visit to the village, to stay for some time. It is treated with great respect, for soon it will go back to the sea, not to return until next season. If a hospitable reception has been accorded it, the whale may tell its relatives about it, inducing them to come along; for, according to the Koryak, the whales, like all other animals, constitute a family of relatives living in villages, like the Koryak themselves.<sup>4</sup>

The whale festival is a communal affair, all inhabitants of the vil-

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descent from one or another animal) has not created the gentile gods—as is usually assumed—but that, on the contrary, the gentile gods have given rise to totemism." Thus Sternberg believes that the origin of totemism advocated by him is "clearly demonstrated" by this one instance, in which, as he admits, totemism did not so originate. This is a good illustration of the origin of some "theories of origin."

<sup>1</sup> Sternberg, loc. cit., pp. 260-74.

<sup>2</sup> Sternberg (loc. cit., p. 258) notes this rather striking analogy.

<sup>3</sup> Krasheninnikoff, cited by Jochelson ("The Koryak," *Yesup Expedition*, Vol. VI, 1908, p. 65). A similar custom was found by Boas among the Eskimos of Baffin Land.

<sup>4</sup> Jochelson, op. cit., p. 66.

lage participating. The owner of the skin boat by whose crew the whale has been killed acts as the host and officiates at the festivities. The following passage from Jochelson's vivid description of the ceremonies performed at the host's house is particularly suggestive: "The space to the left of the entrance . . . was unoccupied. In this section, near the wall, was the shrine in which were placed the charms, attired in grass neckties, — the sacred fire-board, the master of the nets, the honor-guardian, the spear consecrated to the spirit of the wolf, and a few other minor guardians. Among them was a wooden image of a white whale . . . in front of which was a small cup filled with water, which was changed every day during the festival; and on a grass bag were small boiled pieces of the nostrils, lips, flippers, and tail of the white whale. . . . It is interesting to note," adds Jochelson, "that the sacrifice to the spirit of the animal consists of parts of its own body, while, on the other hand, these parts represent the white whale itself."<sup>1</sup>

Gathering the equipment for the journey, and the "sending-off" of the white whale, give occasion for another set of ceremonies.

Similar festivals are held by the Reindeer Koryak at the end of the fawning period, on the return of the herds in the fall, and at the reindeer races.<sup>2</sup> There is also a wolf festival, but the wolf is not sent home. The Koryak believe that "the wolf is a rich reindeer-owner and the powerful master of the tundra." The Reindeer Koryak hold the wolf in particular awe; for them "the wolf is a powerful shaman, and he is regarded as an evil spirit hostile to the reindeer, and roaming all over the earth."<sup>3</sup>

Here, then, we have examples of elaborate animal cults, surrounded by all the paraphernalia of religion, ritual, and myth, taking place among non-totemic or only faintly totemic peoples. And similar instances could be adduced from almost any quarter of the globe.

*Totem Worship and the Totemic Stage.* — As one looks about for illustrations of totem worship, he discovers that materials are scanty. We know of tribes like the Iroquois or like any number of tribes in

<sup>1</sup> Jochelson, op. cit. Cf. Marillier's statement ("La place du totémisme dans l'évolution religieuse," *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, Vol. XXXVII, 1898, p. 218): "Sacrifice, in fact, is often found where there is no totemism; where totemism occurs, it is not uncommon to find that no sacrifices are offered to it, especially that it is not sacrificed to itself." Marillier might have expressed himself more emphatically.

<sup>2</sup> Jochelson, op. cit., pp. 86-7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 88-90.

India,<sup>1</sup> where the totem is a mere eponym, just a common name of a group of individuals who regard themselves as related. We are told, of course, that among these peoples the totemic name is the only feature that survived from a one-time stage of totemism, with all its accessories. But of this there is no evidence. American examples of an indirect religious attitude towards the totems, as expressed in ceremonies, are familiar. We dwelt at some length on this feature among the tribes of the North-West. Similar conditions have been described among the Siouan tribes.<sup>2</sup> African tribes furnish little evidence of a totem worship of any kind. Here the case of the Bahima is instructive. As stated before, we find among these people fourteen totemic clans, the majority (eleven) of the totems being varieties of cows. But no veneration is paid to these animals. The religious side of Bahima life lies in a totally different direction. "Their religion consists chiefly in dealing with ghosts of departed relatives, and in standing well with them; from the king to the humble peasant the ghosts call for daily consideration and constant offerings, while the deities (not the totems, but still another variety of supernatural beings are meant) are only sought in great trials or national calamities." These deities seem to be gentile protectors; for "each clan has its own special deity, who alone takes an interest in that particular clan; to this deity the clan resorts for help and advice."<sup>3</sup> Writing of the Eastern Torres Straits islanders, Haddon thus summarizes the totemic situation on its religious side: "The totem animals of a clan are sacred only to the members of that clan; but the idea of sacredness is very weak, merely implying a family connection, a certain amount of magical affinity, and immunity from being killed by a member of that clan. No worship or reverence, so far as I know, was ever paid to a totem."<sup>4</sup> How little piety the Australian shows, if not in everything, in his dealings with the totem, we saw in the preceding pages. There is one exception, however, that of the Wollunqua totem of the Warramunga. The ceremonies performed in connexion with that totem extend over

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<sup>1</sup> See Gurdon, *op. cit.*, p. 66, and the accounts of the religions of the various castes given in Risley, *op. cit.* Campbell, in his chapter on the Marathas (p. 99), refers to "*devaks* or sacred symbols, which appear to have been originally totems, and affect marriage to the extent that a man cannot marry a woman whose *devak* reckoned on the male side is the same as his own. They are totems worshipped during marriage and other important ceremonies." But while some space is devoted to Marathra religion, nothing is said of this totem worship.

<sup>2</sup> See Dorsey, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-544.

<sup>3</sup> Roscoe, *loc. cit.*, pp. 108-10.

<sup>4</sup> Haddon: "Magic and Religion (Eastern Islanders)," *Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, Vol. VI, pp. 363-4.

several days, during which period no less than eight designs are drawn upon the ground <sup>1</sup> — a very rare feature among these tribes, the only two other totems in connexion with which such designs are recorded being the emu <sup>2</sup> and the black snake.<sup>3</sup> One of the Wollunqua designs is drawn upon a mound erected for that special occasion. The ceremony “is supposed in some way to be associated with the idea of persuading, or almost forcing, the Wollunqua to remain quietly in his home under the water-hole at Thapaeurlu and do no harm to any of the natives. They say that when he sees the mound with his representation drawn upon it, he is gratified and wriggles about underneath with pleasure. The savage attack upon the mound is associated with the idea of driving him down, and, taken altogether, the ceremony indicates their belief that at one and the same time they can both please and coerce the mythic beast.” <sup>4</sup> A visit to the water-pool in which the “mythical beast” resides is described by Spencer and Gillen. During the journey the natives had been talking and laughing freely, but as the party approached Thapaeurlu itself, “they became very quiet and solemn; and, as we silently stood on the margin of the pool, the two old Tjapeltjeri men — the chief men of the totemic group — went down to the edge of the water, and, with bowed heads, addressed the Wollunqua in whispers, asking him to remain quiet and do them no harm, for they were mates of his and had brought up two great white men to see where he lived and to tell them all about him. We could plainly see that it was all very real to them, and that they implicitly believed that the Wollunqua was indeed alive beneath the water, watching them, though they could not see him.” <sup>5</sup> Thus the religious sentiment inspired by the Wollunqua must be described as intense. But, then, this case is altogether irregular. The snake is not, like other totems, the representative of a species, but is an individual; the ancestral Wollunqua itself — like Thaballa, the Laughing Boy, but unlike other totems — never died, but persisted from the mythical period up to the present day. The Wollunqua is believed by the natives to be “a huge beast, so large that if it were to stand up on its tail, its head would reach far away into the heavens.” When speaking of the snake among themselves, the natives do not call it by its real name,

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, pp. 741-3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 252-3.



Wollunqua, but use a circumlocution meaning "snake living in water."<sup>1</sup> These incidents and attitudes bear the earmarks of a true cult.

Here, then, we have a totem which is actually worshipped; but it is an exceptional totem, and the worship accorded it only tends to emphasize the comparative indifference, religiously speaking, with which other totems are treated. In the *intichiuma* and other totemic ceremonies there is, of course, a pronounced religious element. It may, perhaps, be doubted whether the religious atmosphere during these Australian performances ever reaches that frenzied intensity observable in the dancing societies of the North-West, but the impression conveyed by Spencer and Gillen's descriptions is that at some of these occasions religious emotion runs high. But even then the bull-roarer is, at least for the women, a more prominent religious factor than the totem itself.<sup>2</sup>

Taking the evidence in its entirety, the religious aspect of totemism, as such, seems to be slight; nor is there, except rarely, any real worship or veneration of the totem.

This view is shared by a number of authoritative writers. "The importance belonging to totem animals as friends or enemies of man," says Tylor, "is insignificant in comparison with that of ghosts or demons, to say nothing of higher deities."<sup>3</sup> And, again: "Totemism claims a far greater importance in society, than in religion."<sup>4</sup> In his article, "Animals," of which I spoke before, Thomas writes: "One of the most widely distributed animal cults is that known as totemism; it is, however, rather negative, consisting in abstinence from injuring the totem animal, than positive, showing itself in acts of worship."<sup>5</sup> And more emphatically than any other author, although no longer correctly in detail, Marillier declares: "It is far from true, moreover, that the totem becomes the object of a genuine cult on the part of the members of the clan to which it gives its name: it is respected and venerated, one avoids killing it, one avoids even more scrupulously eating its flesh or covering oneself with its fur; one caresses it and tries to please it; but only exceptionally does one celebrate in its honour rites similar to those instituted to the naturalistic gods or the souls

<sup>1</sup> Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes*, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> See Spencer and Gillen: *Native Tribes*, p. 246; and Howitt, op. cit., pp. 596, 606, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Tylor: "Remarks on Totemism," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXVIII (1899), p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas, loc. cit., p. 489.

of the dead; totemism, as an institution, is found almost everywhere, even though it is absent among certain peoples, but totemic cults are relatively rare."<sup>1</sup>

Attempts were made from time to time to represent totemism as a distinct form of religion and assign it a permanent place in the evolution of religious beliefs.<sup>2</sup> As the case now stands, the theoretical objections to this mode of procedure need not be insisted upon. If the religious aspect of totemism is insignificant when compared to other forms of religion or to the other features of totemism; if the totem, as an object of worship, proves to be perhaps the least permanent and qualitatively the most *variable* of totemic features; then the theory of totemism as a necessary stage in the development of religion loses whatever foundation it may have possessed; nor does it seem feasible any longer to think of totemism as a specific form of religion.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marillier, loc. cit., Vol. XXXVI, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> These attempts were all characterized by an almost complete identification of totemism with animal worship and by an abuse of the method of survivals. The former is particularly true of Spencer (*Principles of Sociology*, Vol. I), the latter of McLennan (*Fortnightly Review*, Vol. VI, 1869, pp. 407-27, 562-84), and Robertson Smith (*Kinship and Marriage in Arabia and Religion of the Semites*). The same method of reasoning was applied with superficial success by F. B. Jevons in his ambitious *Introduction to the History of Religions*. Jevons's contentions were brilliantly dealt with by Léon Marillier (in his articles referred to before), a scholar whose contribution to totemic thought has not been duly appreciated. Wundt, in his *Völkerpsychologie* (*Mythus und Religion*, Part 2), did not rise above the standpoint of the authors referred to. He allies totemism directly with "animalism": "The original animal cult rests on the belief that man descends from animals, and wherever animal cult has come to occupy a dominant place in primitive mythology, this belief usually takes the form of a tribal group tracing its descent to a particular animal. These are the phenomena usually designated by the term 'totemism'" (p. 236). Taking the totem ancestor as his point of departure ("this trait is specifically characteristic of totemism," p. 241), Wundt leads us through animal gods and sacred animals to human ancestor-worship—"Manismus." This rectilinear deduction is, of course, theoretically untenable; Wundt's position being further weakened by his doubtful assertion that animal worship must have preceded the worship of man: "In this way the animal ancestor becomes an unusually potent protective spirit, and the trust in its protection is doubly strong because this ancestor belongs, on the one hand, to the remote past, and, on the other, it is represented by its contemporaneous animal descendants. In this way it happens that among primitives the memory of human ancestors fades after one or two generations, whereas the animal ancestor is constantly being projected from the immediate present into the vague past. For this reason the animal ancestor may not be regarded as a curious paradoxical variant of ancestor worship, but appears as the only possible primitive form of that worship. The animal ancestor paves the way for the human ancestor" (p. 271). The weakness of Spencer's ill-famed theory of the human ghost as the prime source of all religion could hardly be better emphasized than by this even less plausible inversion of it.

<sup>3</sup> I here defend a position which is diametrically opposed to that of an author who professes to represent totemism "in the American sense of the term." "Totemism to me is primarily and essentially a religious phenomenon, the direct result and outcome of the savage's mental attitude towards nature," writes Hill-Tout ("Report on the Ethnology of the Stlatlunh of British Columbia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XXXV, 1905, p. 141). Referring to the emphasis laid by some on the social aspect of totemism, he proceeds: "It does not seem to me scientific to regard what is demonstrably an unstable, and therefore a secondary phase of totem-

The particular religious colouring, moreover, assumed by totemism in any given cultural area may be due to the presence in that area of beliefs which are in no way totemic in their origin, or in their other manifestations, outside the limits of the totemic complex.

#### THE COMPLEX IN THE MAKING

*Summary of Evidence.*—The foregoing review of the nature and behaviour of "totemic" features was superficial and could have been carried to much greater length; it will suffice, however, to substantiate the tentative conclusions drawn on the basis of a more careful comparison of Australia and the North-West Coast.

We find that clan exogamy, far from being a necessary concomitant of other totemic features, behaves with marked independence both as to character and distribution. In some regions exogamy is absent, while some or all of the other features are pronounced. In other localities a number or all of the other features are lacking; there is thus no totemism, but clan exogamy obtains. In one place exogamy is found in a group without territorial unity, scattered over a wide area; in another, exogamy is a purely local phenomenon. It may be associated with a clan the members of which are held together by a vague sense of kinship; or, again, it may refer to groups of men and women standing to each other in certain definite degrees of relationship. The psychological nature of exogamy is complex; so that in many cases it is difficult to decide whether we are dealing with clan, phratry, or relationship exogamy. The conditions under which exogamy may develop are varied; in the course of its historical development, moreover, it may undergo manifold transformations in extent and psychological setting, the character of its growth and origin thus becoming obscured. What is true of exogamy applies to its close correlate, endogamy. Both tendencies, having assumed manifold forms in primi-

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ism, as its essential and primary characteristic, and overlook another coexisting with it, which is clearly more constant, and therefore a more essential feature" (ibid., p. 142). The validity of this opinion may be judged in the light of the preceding pages. It may be well to add here that Hill-Tout's "American" view of totemism is not shared by two investigators who, like himself, are familiar figures in British Columbia. Professor Boas and Dr. Swanton rather incline to the view that totemism is essentially a form of association between a religious and a social phenomenon; nor are they at all dogmatic on the subject of the genetic relationship between the tutelary spirit and the group totem, although Professor Boas admits the plausibility of such a development among the Kwakiutl. It will be seen that Hill-Tout's views are no more representative of the American attitude towards totemism than was that other "American View of Totemism" which treated of the naming system of the "Amerinds" (see Powell, in *Man*, Vol. II, No. 75, 1902).

tive times, continue to be operative in later periods of history, including the present.

Totemic names and the concept of descent from the totem prove to be equally variable features. They may be present or absent in a totemic complex; nor are they, geographically and psychologically speaking, any more "totemic" than is exogamy. Animal and such like names have been given and assumed at all times; the eponymous totem is but one aspect of naming after animals and other things. Similarly with descent: the ancestral totem is but one type of animal or, more generally, non-human ancestor.

The evidence in regard to taboos points in the same direction. The prohibition to eat or kill the totem is not coextensive with totemism. Such prohibitions, again, are often associated with animals other than totems: sacred animals of various kinds, individual guardian animals, etc. In many ways the prohibitions to eat and kill partake more intimately of the nature of other prohibitions referring to behaviour, speech, etc., than they do of the nature of other totemic features with which they may be associated. Known history discloses a multitude of origins and developments of taboos, without, however, exhausting all the possible ways in which taboos may have originated, or all the actual ways in which they did originate. And once more I must emphasize that the psychological setting of a taboo at any given place and time may prove a misleading cue to its past history. We find in our own customs numerous survivals and traces of ancient taboos; and the psychological tendencies which were responsible for the rise of taboos in the past still continue to be operative in the introduction of various prohibitions, among them those of killing and eating.

A religious attitude towards animals, plants, and natural objects is obviously a cultural feature of wider scope than totemism. The totem, as such, on the other hand, functions but rarely as an object of religious regard, even though the general atmosphere in which totemic beliefs and customs are immersed certainly belongs to the religious or mystical level. The variability of this feature, whenever it is at all associated with the totem itself, is striking. We find all degrees of emotional attitude towards the totem, from devout and direct veneration to mild regard, from a strong but indirect religious attitude to complete indifference. In the prevalence of the guardian-spirit idea among the North-West Indians, with its deep influence on totemistic beliefs, we recognize one type of process to which the attitude towards the totem in any given locality may owe its specific colouring.

So much for the traits once recognized as the classical "symptoms" of totemism. The evidence is convincing, and, as said before, it could be materially increased. Exogamy, taboo, religious regard, totemic names, descent from the totem — all fail as invariable characteristics of totemism. These traits, moreover, display a more or less striking independence in distribution and appear on analysis to be widespread cultural features, multiform in origin, possessing a rich variability of psychological make-up, and in no sense inherently totemic but only incidentally so.

If the totemic complexes in the different areas are to be regarded as conglomerates of essentially independent features, the fundamental error in two lines of totemistic inquiry and speculation becomes at once apparent. I mean the attempts to assign to the various factors in totemism a correlated historical development, and the tendency either to combine these factors or to derive them from each other, psychologically. An integral development of totemism loses its plausibility, in view of the demonstrated historical independence of its factors; while the psychological complexity and variability of the latter discourages any attempt at direct psychological derivations. Any one totemic feature might, with equal plausibility, be taken as a starting-point, and the others derived from it, without transgressing the bounds of either historical or psychological possibilities. The interpretative value, however, of such derivations is nil.

In each individual case the actual historical process has doubtless been more complex, both objectively and psychologically, than the direct derivations would make it; and it is to such historical processes, or to whatever of them we may safely reconstruct, that we must turn in future interpretations.

It was shown before that the composition of totemic complexes need not be limited to the features just mentioned. In central Australia magical ceremonies and a belief in spirit incarnation rise to great prominence in all matters totemic. In the American North-West a similar role is assumed by decorative art and the guardian-spirit idea. A more intensive study of totemic areas may well reveal still other features associated with the rest, and possibly dominating over them. The ceremony of knocking out the teeth, which in South Africa and central Australia has nothing to do with totemism, forms in south-east Australia part of the totemic initiation rites. Among the Omaha particular ways of fixing the hair have become firmly associated with the totems. Thus to the original set of social and religious features

a number of others are added, æsthetic, ceremonial, spiritual, and — as in the regulation of the food-supply by the *intichiuma* rituals — economic. It would seem, then, that almost any kind of cultural attitude or activity may, at one time or another, enter into the composition of a totemic complex.

If totemism includes, roughly speaking, everything, is totemism itself anything in particular? Is there anything specific in this phenomenon, or has the name "totemism" simply been applied to one set of features here, to another set there, and still elsewhere, perhaps, to both sets combined?

One point, at least, is quite clear: if we continue to use the term "totemism," we may no longer apply it to any concrete cultural content; for while almost anything may be included, no feature is necessary or characteristic. On the basis of material furnished by some one area or a number of areas, a definite group of features is called "totemism." Another totemic area is discovered where an additional feature is found, or where one of the old ones is missing. Immediately the questions arise (and here we are on historical ground): Is this totemism? Or was that totemism? Or is this true totemism, while that was incompletely developed, totemism *im Werden*? Or was that true totemism, and this is a later development, totemism in decay? In the light of the foregoing discussion, any definite answer to these questions must needs be arbitrary.

*Theories of Totemism.* — In their attempts to divorce totemism from the variability of its "symptoms," various authors have tried to emphasize some one of its features which was proclaimed the essential one, while the others were derived, and hence of necessity less important and less constant.

Major Powell thus came to see in totemism a "doctrine of naming." His article consists in an enumeration of the various uses of the term "totem."<sup>1</sup> Hill-Tout conveniently summarizes the main points of Powell's exposition under the three heads of "individual guardian spirit," the "animal protector of a secret society," and the "eponymous object of a consanguineous group." In all three cases the term "totem" is applied to the eponymous object, to the name itself, and to the symbolic representation of the object.<sup>2</sup> This doctrine of naming

<sup>1</sup> Powell, loc. cit., pp. 101-6.

<sup>2</sup> Hill-Tout: "Totemism: A Consideration of its Origin and Import," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Second Series, Vol. IX (1903-4), pp. 63-4.

calls for little comment. We cheerfully endorse Thomas's statement that "it is difficult to see the advantage of a system of nomenclature where everything is called by the same name."<sup>1</sup> It was shown, moreover, that social groups do not always derive their names from their totems. Accordingly a doctrine of naming, even if restricted to naming after animals (plants, objects), falls short of the mark as a definition of totemism; and why, finally, should just this feature, even if it were constant, be considered the original or essential one?<sup>2</sup>

For Hill-Tout, as we saw, the essential element in totemism is its religious side. He regards the individual guardian spirit, the tutelary animal of a secret society, and the clan totem, as essentially alike. He also believes that the last developed out of the individual guardian spirit. It was pointed out before that this theory, although plausible for certain sections of British Columbia and perhaps for the Omaha, is quite arbitrary when applied to other groups of North America and becomes more than improbable when extended to the clan totemism of Australia. Nor is he more fortunate in his specific characterizations. Says Hill-Tout: "It is important, in the first place, to bear in mind that it is always the essence or the 'mystery' . . . which respectively becomes the totem, not the bodily form of the animal or object."<sup>3</sup> Now, this may be true of the Salish *sulia* (here Hill-Tout is our first-hand authority), but it certainly does not hold for the rest of British Columbia. As to Australia, especially the central tribes, it is clearly not for any essence or "mystery" that the multiplication ceremonies are performed, but for the animal itself, flesh and blood. We know, finally, that among the Iroquois, in many cases in British Columbia, and elsewhere, the religious element in totemism is reduced to nil, the totem being no more than a badge or name. The "concept of a ghostly helper or tutelary spirit," concludes Hill-Tout, "is the essential element in totemism. This is totemism, in its pure and naked state; i.e., shorn of its social accessories."<sup>4</sup> Now, even if Hill-Tout's historical and psychological contentions were true — which they manifestly are not — what but confusion could result if we applied the term "to-

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas: "A Note on Major Powell's Article," *Man*, Vol. II (1902), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that Spencer and Lubbock accounted for the origin of totemism by a process of misinterpretation of nicknames, the former adding the factor of ancestor worship, omitted by the latter. Lang also tends to identify the origin of totemism with animal names received by social groups from without (*Social Origins*, p. 161), and lays corresponding stress on the presence of totemic names in full-grown totemism.

<sup>3</sup> Hill-Tout: "Totemism," p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

temism" to that religious element which, although always "the same thing," appears in so many different settings? Or, granting the term, would that solution of the question throw any light on our crucial problem—whether, namely, there is anything distinctive about the many totemic complexes found in different areas, or whether what we really find there are but aggregations of varied features to which, arbitrarily enough, a common name—totemism—was given?<sup>1</sup>

Schmidt, finally, regards the element of descent as the most important one. "Totemism consists essentially in the individuals who belong to the same totem regarding themselves as its descendants, therefore as related, and consequently as unable to intermarry."<sup>2</sup> This, of course, is no less arbitrary than the other contentions; for the idea of totemic descent does not occur in all totemic complex, nor is there any reason to consider just this factor as the original or essential one.

The above analysis of a few of the many attempts to interpret totemism leads to the conclusion that no particular set of features can be taken as characteristic of totemism, for the composition of a totemic complex is variable; nor can any single feature be regarded as fundamental, for not one of the features does invariably occur in conjunction with others; nor is there any evidence to regard any one feature as the first in order of development, or as primary, psychologically.

*Another Theory.*—One or two American investigators, Boas<sup>3</sup> in particular, have expressed the view that the peculiarity of totemic phenomena was not to be found in the sum of totemic elements in any given tribe, or in any individual element, but in the relation obtaining between the elements. Tylor once suggested a similar interpretation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hill-Tout notes his partial agreement with Frazer, who, as a matter of fact, committed the same error by over-emphasizing the religious element. He admits, it is true, that there are two sides to totemism—a social and a religious one—but he promptly abandons this position in classifying totems as individual, sex, and clan totems. In Frazer's later writings this religious factor reappears in the guise of a magical and a conceptional totemism. These two theories followed closely upon the appearance of Spencer and Gillen's first and second treatises on the Arunta. The data thus brought to light led Frazer to assume, first, magical practices, then beliefs about the conception of children, to lie at the root of Arunta totemism. And if among the Arunta, why not everywhere?

<sup>2</sup> Schmidt: "L'Origine de l'idée de Dieu," *Anthropos*, 1908, p. 805.

<sup>3</sup> Boas: "Psychological Problems in Anthropology," *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XXI (1910), p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Tylor, "Remarks on Totemism," loc. cit., p. 144.



In the light of the foregoing discussion, it becomes obvious that whatever may be specific about totemism must lie in some such relation. That the relation involved is a type of association will, I think, be readily admitted. The five "symptoms," or two or three of them, or all and a few others in addition, become associated and thus constitute a totemic whole. That the process is an association, and not a mere juxtaposition, is, indeed, apparent. True, each of the elements in question is complex and variable; but in each totemic combination forces are at work which tend to correlate the several heterogeneous elements, thus reducing them, as it were, to a common denominator, a totemic one. Ultimately the totemic complex assumes the character of an organic whole. Confronted with this, the student is readily deluded into believing that the elements thus found associated necessarily belong together, either as inherently related or even as mere aspects of one fundamental phenomenon.

That the association is an intimate one is, however, true and significant. In studying the organization of the tribes of central Australia, for instance, we can no longer separate the taboos from the *intichiuma* ceremonies, the belief in soul incarnation from certain material objects (the *churingas*), totemic descent, or the sacred ceremonies. All of these features, finally, are inextricably intertwined with the social organization, at least with the phratries and clans, and can no longer be analysed or understood if abstracted from the social context. The same is true of the Omaha gentes, with their specific religious practices, modes of wearing the hair, ideas as to descent; or of the North-West tribes, with their clan traditions, dancing societies, masks, carvings, potlatches, etc. In some areas, again, we can note the tendency of one or more features to dominate over the rest, to play more than a proportionate part in the totemic combination. It was shown that in central Australia spiritual beliefs and the *intichiuma* ceremonies assumed such a dominant role; whereas on the Pacific coast the belief in supernatural power-yielding guardians, and the representation of crests and traditions in plastic and dramatic art, were equally prominent.

The intimacy of the above associations could not have become so close if not for the fact that the various elements — religious, æsthetic, ceremonial, and what not — became linked with definite social units of which they henceforth functioned as prerogatives or symbols. This association with social units is what constitutes the nuclear fact of totemic combinations. Elements which are *per se* indifferent or vague

in their social bearings—such as dances, songs, carvings, rituals, names, etc.—become associated with clearly defined social groups and, by virtue of such association, become themselves transformed into social values, not merely intensified in degree, but definite and specific in character. The one obvious and important means by which the association with definite social groups is accomplished is inheritance.

Through inheritance the heterogeneous features which enter into the composition of a totemic complex become firmly fixed as traits of a set of social units. Whatever the nucleus of the composite institution may have been among any given people—and we may postulate a great variety of such nuclei as possible starting-points of totemism—the many beliefs, ceremonies, traditions, and customs generally found associated with the totems could not have arisen or become part of the totemic process all at once. As the totems, with their supporting social system, would rise into prominence, various beliefs and rituals would tend to cluster about them. No sooner would a religious, ritualistic, æsthetic element become associated with the totems, thus gaining in emotional value, than it would tend to be handed on through inheritance, together with group membership; and once hereditary, it would begin to function as a permanent feature of the underlying social structure, with its interpenetrating totemic complex.<sup>1</sup> But—

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<sup>1</sup> The Arunta deserve a special word in this connexion. Among them an individual's totem is not determined by his father's totem or by that of his mother. Thus the element which was represented above as a potent factor in producing permanent associations between religious beliefs and practices and definite social groups—namely, inheritance—seems to be absent here. In accordance with this fact, we found the Arunta totemic clans to be very weak as social units. When the parents do not know to what particular totem their children will belong, the social solidarity of the group, as totemic, must needs be impaired. Two other facts must be considered in this connexion, facts which tend to ally the Arunta with those communities where the totem is inherited. Strehlow asserts that, in addition to his own totem acquired in the unique way peculiar to this group, each individual has also another totem—that, namely, of his mother. Unfortunately, Strehlow does not inform us sufficiently on the relative importance of the two totems. Do individuals with the same maternal totems regard this fact as a social bond? If so, we might have to recognize among the Arunta two intercrossing totemic groupings.

In order duly to appreciate the second point we must return to the concept of inheritance. When viewed in connexion with objects of religious concern—as in religious societies or in communities like the Thompson River Indians, where random individual acquisition of guardian spirits prevails—inheritance involves two correlated factors: (1) a particular religious object is assigned to an individual at birth; and (2) the necessity of personally acquiring it is eliminated (although individual acquisition of the same object may also persist, or one or more other objects may be acquired in addition). The first factor—the determination of the religious object at birth, through inheritance—tends to check the multiplication of such religious objects in the group. In fact, if inheritance becomes imperative and individual acquisition eliminated, the number of religious objects must decrease through the dying-out of groups sharing the same religious object and united by paternal or maternal descent. If a process of this character began

to repeat it once more — the various beliefs and practices which thus become fused in totemism need not be psychological derivatives of the original totemic nucleus, nor need they be of local origin.

*Totemic Complexes and Religious Societies.* — In this connexion a word is due to religious societies. A religious society is a group of individuals who have a common name (often derived from animal, bird, or thing), share a set of religious and mythological beliefs, and perform together certain ceremonies. Where the societies occur, there are usually two or more of them in a tribe, while often most of the tribesmen may be grouped in societies either permanently or, as among the Kwakiutl, periodically. While male societies are more common, female societies also occur, but the membership in a society is almost invariably restricted to one or the other sex.

The geographical distribution of religious societies suggests some relation to totemism. In a large number of totemic areas religious societies also occur; for example, in several large areas in North America, in at least one area in South America, in west Africa, and in northern Melanesia. On the basis of his Melanesian studies Rivers came to the conclusion that in Mota (one of the Banks Islands) re-

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to be operative in a group like the Arunta or the Thompson River Indians,—where the number of religious objects is very large, and the number of individuals sharing each such object very small—the elimination of groups would at first be very rapid, with the result that in the course of a few centuries the community would be reduced to a comparatively small number of groups with their respective religious objects. Some such process is probably responsible for the fact that, wherever inheritance of the totem is a permanent characteristic, the number of totemic units is comparatively small.

With elimination of the element of individual acquisition the emotional value of religious objects tends to decrease. The process of socialization of religious elements transforms them into social elements, with a consequent depreciation or loss of their religious character. Hill-Tout admits this in the following statement: "The farther we get away from the personal character of the totem, the less religiously significant it becomes." But his conclusion is curious: "A study of totemism from the social point of view will never reveal to us its origin and true import."

An instructive commentary upon our analysis of the factor of inheritance is provided by the Thompson Indians, in comparison with the Kwakiutl and Arunta. Among the Thompson there is, with some few exceptions, no inheritance of the guardian spirits, and individual acquisition prevails; accordingly, the multiplication of guardian spirits is not checked, their number being legion, while their religious character is pronounced. Among the Kwakiutl, while there is no inheritance of the guardian spirits, an individual's choice is limited to the spirits belonging to his clan—not a definite spirit, but a limited choice of spirits is inherited. Further multiplication of guardian spirits is therefore checked. Individual acquisition, however, prevails, and the religious value of the spirit protectors remains strong. Among the Arunta an individual's totem is determined at birth, there is no individual acquisition, and the religious character of the totem is weak. Here, however, the determination of the totem at birth, and the absence of individual acquisition, do not, as in other cases, check the multiplication of totems. The reason for this is that among the Arunta the element of individual acquisition is present, vicariously: the mothers, namely, individually acquire the totems for their children. If some similar process of acquiring the totems were gone through by the individuals themselves, the religious factor would probably be more prominent than we now find it to be.

ligious societies arose out of a pre-existing totemism which was, as it were, sucked up into these societies.<sup>1</sup> Webster went much further, his view being that secret societies everywhere represented totemism in decay.<sup>2</sup> In this version the societies appear as a normal stage in the evolution from totemism to other forms of socio-religious organization.

While certainly erroneous in this sweeping form, the theory may nevertheless contain a germ of truth. In individual instances—in Mota, for example, or perhaps in the American South-West—religious societies may actually have developed in this way. Also, the two institutions, which certainly rest against a similar socio-psychological and ideological background, must be regarded as compatible, even though not genetically linked, except incidentally. The case of the Kwakiutl is instructive here, among whom, as we saw, societies and totemic clans alternate: in the summer (the *profane* season) the clans constitute the social organization, whereas in the winter (the season of the *secrets*) these are replaced, or, more accurately, overshadowed, by a system of religious societies. One would not expect such periodic fluctuation between a system of clans and, say, one of castes!

Of even greater interest than the geographical and possible genetic relations of totemism and societies, are the similarities and contrasts of the two institutions from a theoretical standpoint. In both cases the tribe comprises a set of homologous social units; these units exercise functions—ceremonial, religious, artistic—similar in kind, but differing specifically in each clan or society. These functions, finally, cluster about or grow out of certain mystical attitudes towards things or creatures in nature. The latter feature, incidentally, is more nearly characteristic of totemism than it is of societies. In both cases, finally, the institution—totemic complex or cluster of societies—must be regarded as an alloy of historically disparate and psychologically complex traits.

The similarity, from a theoretical angle, thus seems to be so close as almost to approach identity. But the contrasts are equally significant. While a society, like a sib (clan or gens), is a social unit, it is one solely by dint of the common functions of its members. Take away

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<sup>1</sup> Rivers: *History of Melanesian Society*, Vol. II, and "Totemism in Polynesia and Melanesia," loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Webster: *Primitive Secret Societies*, and "Totem Clans and Secret Associations in Australia and Melanesia," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XLI (1911).

the functions, and nothing remains but an aggregate of wholly disparate individuals. Not so in the sib. There also the functions give the true cultural orientation of the social unit, but should the functions lapse, the unit remains. For a sib consists of related individuals (*de facto* or *de jure*) — it is a group of status; whereas a society is a purely functional group. While this contrast is, perhaps, most important, other differences are not lacking. The religious aspect is almost invariably more pronounced in a society than in a totemic sib. Societies, as we saw, are largely unisexual — not so sibs. It would, indeed, seem absurd to think of a sib in such a light, for the reason that sibs are practically always unilateral hereditary social units into which men and women are born. Thus a totemic complex, with its supporting skeleton of sibs, comprises *all* the individuals of a tribe, whereas a tribal cluster of societies includes at best some of the women and never more than a large proportion of the men.

We conclude, then, that the two institutions — totemism and religious societies — present a set of similar theoretical problems. On account, however, of equally significant differences, they should be kept apart conceptually as well as for purposes of investigation.<sup>1</sup>

*Totemism as a Convergent Complex.* — But let us return to the totemic complex and its component elements. As was shown in the preceding pages, the "origins" and historical fates of totemic complexes must be assumed to have been varied. Nevertheless, totemic complexes reveal sufficient similarities in structure, content, and psychic atmosphere (Thurnwald's *Denkart*), to justify the designation of such complexes by one descriptive term. The hypothesis of convergence reconciles this present similarity with genetic diversity. The theory of convergence may, in fact, be utilized to account for three distinct aspects of totemic complexes. The separate features in two or more complexes, in so far as they are comparable, must have often been due to convergence, for the objective and psychological history of such features must, in many instances, have been quite different. Again, the totemic social structures with their features, which as a rule are strictly comparable, must be ascribed to convergence; for the order and particular mode of absorption of the features by the system, or their origins within the system, must also have been vastly different in the several instances — the totemic association is a convergent

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<sup>1</sup> The section on religious societies is reproduced, with some changes, from my article, "Totemism," in the *New International Encyclopædia* (second edition).

process. And, finally, the totemization of the complexes, the translation of the features of whatever derivation into totemic terms, must be regarded as a convergent process, which operates in the core of each complex with a psychologically heterogeneous aggregate of cultural features and through a process of assimilation moulds them into a totemic atmosphere. Such an atmosphere pervades all totemic complexes, thus providing a basis for their comparability. The totemic assimilation is a convergent process.<sup>1</sup>

*Totemism Defined.* — Before attempting to define totemism, let us make sure of the elements such a definition should include, in order to be serviceable.

If we want the term "totemism" to designate something definite, the concrete content of the phenomenon must not be expressed in the definition; for, as shown above, the concrete totemic content varies with places and peoples. The content, then, must be expressed in the most general terms.

We saw that the one common factor in the various cultural complexes generally termed "totemism" is an association which occurs between certain religious phenomena, on the one hand, and certain social phenomena, on the other. If, in defining totemism, we agree to restrict the meaning of the term to that association — in other words, if the term "totemism" is to mean a relation of a certain kind rather than the sum of certain concrete factors — we may expect to reach a concept of sufficient definiteness to be serviceable and yet general enough to embrace a vast number of variations in concrete content. Totemism, then, must express a relation.

Totemism, in the current sense, is understood to have a social and a religious side. These are the two factors which become associated. But in many instances, it appears, the religious side of totemism is very weak. When the totem is a crest, it often possesses but little religious value; while the totem as a mere name can in no sense be said to possess any religious significance whatever. Yet in the general character of the association the groups of tribes to which these remarks

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<sup>1</sup> From this point of view, totemic phenomena stand in line with other problems in cultural associations which confront us. Why should certain things which among ourselves tend to remain comparatively independent become firmly associated in primitive communities, and vice versa? What are the laws, if any, of such associations? May we speak of certain types towards which the associations tend? We do not know. It remains for the ethnologists who are also psychologists to throw light on these problems which at present are as dark as they are theoretically interesting.

apply are so much like those groups where the religious side is present that we do not feel justified in separating the two sets in our definition. Thus, if the term "totemism" comes to designate a relation between a religious and a social set of phenomena, our definition will not be wide enough: it could not be made to cover those cases where the religious side is nil. The term "religious" must thus be eliminated.

But if not religious, what? If we survey the various objects and symbols which in certain, but not all, totemic areas assume religious significance, we shall, I think, find that, whether religious or not, these objects and symbols represent certain emotional values for the people to whom they pertain.<sup>1</sup> Eliminating, then, the term "religious," we find that what becomes associated with social units in totemic communities are objects and symbols of emotional value.

We must remember, finally, that the concrete content of a totemic complex changes not merely with place but with time. The product of totemic association and assimilation changes all the while; stages of development become effaced; new features make their appearance; or some features rise in significance, while others recede. If we want to evade this variability in time as we have evaded the local variability, we must apply the term "totemism" not to a static but to a dynamic situation, to a tendency or process.

We are now prepared to venture a definition:

*Totemism is the tendency of definite social units to become associated with objects and symbols of emotional value.*

The totemic process may also be envisaged from the standpoint of the "objects and symbols" rather than from that of the social units with which they become associated. When thus viewed, the process becomes one of socialization. As the social units in question are definite social groups (mostly sibs) perpetuated by descent, the socialization may be designated as specific rather than general. The definition will then assume the following form: *totemism is the process of specific socialization of objects and symbols of emotional value.* But the term "socialization" may in itself be taken to imply a process; while

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<sup>1</sup> It may be objected that wherever the totem is merely a name, as among the Iroquois, no emotional value is attached to it. This is true. But we must remember that at the time when these names were assumed (or accepted from without), they must have been of some emotional concern to the people, else why should they have become hereditary and firmly fixed in definite social groups? It is to this process of association of objects and symbols of emotional value (including names) with social units that we apply the term "totemism" (see farther on). Hence the proposed substitution of "objects and symbols of emotional value" for "religious objects and symbols" does not seem to be invalidated by the objection.

"objects and symbols of emotional value" may, from a psychological angle, be simply designated as "emotional values." Thus, quite briefly and in most general and purely psychological terms: *totemism is the specific socialization of emotional values.*

If we adopt this dynamic and general definition of totemism, a term becomes necessary to cover the concrete content of totemic phenomena in any given tribe or tribes. The term "totemic complex," as used here, seems well adapted for this purpose. The totemic features at a given place and time, associated together and assimilated into a quasi-organic whole, may fitly be designated as "a complex"; and the common factor in all such complexes, the unifying factor, is totemism — the process by which the component elements of totemic complexes become transformed into specific social values firmly associated with definite social units.

#### ORIGINS, IN THEORY AND HISTORY

We may now glance at the theories advanced by various authors to account for the origin of totemism. The number of such theories is very large, but I shall examine only a few in order to make clear what methods are applied in these speculative reconstructions.

Schmidt finds the totemism of north Australia to be best represented by the tribes of the Warramunga group. He analyses their totemism from the point of view of (1) food, (2) marriage, (3) conception and descent. The argument is prefaced by the words: "I think I can demonstrate that this apparently mysterious totemism can be traced to a relatively matter-of-fact and simple source."<sup>1</sup> Schmidt notes with regret that Spencer and Gillen are silent on the subject of trade, "which certainly constitutes an important phase of inter-tribal contact." Hence he turns to the tribes of Torres Straits where, as in Mabuiag, the two totems figuring in the magical ceremonies for the multiplication of the food-supply are the principal, if not the only, articles of food used in trade.

Now, what is the relation between the eating-interdict and the use of these articles in trade? The answer is found at home. Who does not know the familiar fact that our peasants often abstain from using in their own households the food-products they cultivate, and export them, generally to the neighbouring town? What we find here in rudi-

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<sup>1</sup> Schmidt: "Die soziologische und religiös-ethische Gruppierung der australischen Stämme," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XLI (1909), p. 346.



mentary form may develop everywhere under analogous conditions. Such conditions we find wherever the production and consumption of food-articles are locally distinct, so that a tribe must import from its neighbours the articles lacking in its own district. German New Guinea, the Arunta, the Admiralty Islands, are cited as examples. An institution which in our own complex culture does not advance beyond a rudimentary state, becomes easily fixed and stereotyped in the monotonous flow of aboriginal life. The food-interdict on articles of trade, an economic custom in origin, becomes in time a moral law. In the course of ages the original motive of the interdict is forgotten. "There followed a period of doubt and uncertainty, conditions favoring the emergence of metaphysical associations."<sup>1</sup> Schmidt proceeds to make ample use of such metaphysical associations. The animal or plant, in recognition of its importance as an article of diet, becomes the mythical source of the life of the tribe, its ancestor.<sup>2</sup> And what could be more natural than that the group should be called by or assume the name of the animal or plant so plentiful in its district? The beliefs about conception held by these tribes are also utilized in the theory. Conception can occur only when the woman visits the totem centre of her husband, for there the ancestral totem continues to live in the shape of the totemic animals and plants, its descendants. As the direct intercourse with the totemic ancestor comes to the fore, the function of the individual human father is relegated to the background, and with it the sexual act as a cause of conception.

The first stage in the development of this "trade totemism"<sup>3</sup> must be sought in the period of garden-culture. The ceremonies for the multiplication of the totem animal or plant, argues Schmidt, are magical ceremonies. Magic by contact preceded magic at a distance; and as the non-domesticated animal had to be acted upon at a distance, while the plant could be handled by direct contact, the first ceremonies must have been conducted on plants. Garden-culture was the cradle of the magical rites for the multiplication of the totem.<sup>4</sup> Space forbids us to follow the details of Schmidt's picturesque presentation of the taboo situation. He goes on: "I believe therefore that totemism is rooted in garden-culture, supplemented by trade. When the ideological

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<sup>1</sup> Schmidt, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XLI (1909), p. 348.

<sup>2</sup> As if to shirk full responsibility for this argument, Schmidt adds that the relation to the totem is "*übrigens*" not always interpreted as one of descent (*ibid.*, p. 348).

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, "Handels-Totemismus" (*ibid.*, p. 350).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 349-50.

development reaches the level of myths, we may conjecture a perfectly natural growth of all those details with which one becomes familiar when studying the magical ceremonies and the particular variety of totemism connected with them among the northern tribes of Australia.”<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of the facts brought together in Spencer and Gillen's *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, Frazer arrived at the conclusion that the *intichiuma* ceremonies, conducted to further the supply of the totem, lay at the root of central Australian totemism. Spencer had independently reached the same conclusion: “Have we not in these *Intichiuma* ceremonies the key to the original meaning and purpose of Totemism among the Central Australian tribes, perhaps even of Totemism in general?”<sup>2</sup> In favour of his hypothesis Frazer urges that “it is simple and natural, and in entire conformity with both the practical needs and the modes of thought of savage man. Nothing can be more natural than that man should wish to eat when he is hungry, to drink when he is thirsty, to have fire to warm him when he is cold, and fresh breezes to cool him when he is hot; and to the savage nothing seems simpler than to procure for himself these and all other necessities and comforts by magic art.”<sup>3</sup> Frazer is much impressed by this totemism which, as “a thoroughly practical system,” accomplishes its end “in a clear and straightforward way,” being all the while “the creation of a crude and barbarous philosophy. All nature has been mapped out into departments; all men have been distributed into corresponding groups; and to each group of men has been assigned, with astounding audacity, the duty of controlling some one department of nature for the common good.”<sup>4</sup>

According to Arunta traditions, the totemites of the mythical period fed on the animal which was their totem. This agrees with the hypothesis, for “why should not a man partake of the food which he is at so much pains to provide?” But whence the subsequent prohibition? “Men may have remarked that animals as a rule, and plants universally [*sic*], do not feed upon their own kind; and hence a certain inconsistency may have been perceived in the conduct of Grub men who lived on grubs, of Grass-seed men who ate grass-seed, and so with the other animal and vegetable totems.”<sup>5</sup> Similarly the Arunta tradi-

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<sup>1</sup> Schmidt, “Handels-Totemismus,” *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. XLI (1909), p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer: “The Origin of Totemism,” *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, p. 664.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 835.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 836.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 838.

tions speak of marriages between totemites; and, once more, this is just what we should expect: "What can be more natural than that an Emu man should wed an Emu woman and an Opossum man should marry an Opossum woman, just as an emu cock mates with an emu hen and a male opossum pairs with a female opossum?"<sup>1</sup> The puzzle of the multiplex totems is also easily accounted for. If the totem clan is a band of magicians, "we can easily see that, where the totem clans were not numerous, it might be found necessary to entrust several departments of nature to each clan." Among the Wotjoballuk, for instance, "if each of [the] six clans were to give its attention exclusively to its particular totem, whole departments of nature, including multitudinous species of animals and plants, would be uncared for, and the consequences to the tribe might be disastrous. What would become of kangaroos, opossums, and wallabies if it were nobody's business to multiply them?"<sup>2</sup>

These two examples may suffice to illustrate the origin-hunting tendency at its worst. I shall not here attempt to criticize in any detail the views just presented. What now concerns us is the curious similarity in method of reasoning in these two, as in many other, instances of hypothetical origins. Some feature is selected as a starting-point — magical ceremonies, or beliefs about conception, or the use of totems as articles of trade. The processes involved are shown to be simple, natural; and if necessary, the tribe in question — say, the Arunta — is "proved" to be primitive. What is more natural for a savage than to eat when he is hungry, to secure his food by magical means, to abstain from using certain food-products in order to exchange them for others cultivated by neighbouring tribes, or ignoring the physical cause of conception, to believe that impregnation is due to a spirit entering the body of a woman? If local evidence is insufficient, analogous phenomena are drawn upon. European peasants abstain from the products of their land in order to sell them in the neighbouring town; animal and other sobriquets occur in western England and elsewhere,<sup>3</sup> etc. Given the foundation, the other features of totemism, maternal as well as paternal, can be derived from it.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, it accounts for the intermingling of stocks in the various

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<sup>1</sup> Frazer: "The Origin of Totemism," *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, p. 840.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 849-50.

<sup>3</sup> Lang: *Social Origins*, p. 173.

<sup>4</sup> Frazer: "The Beginnings of Religion and Totemism among the Australian Aborigines," *Fortnightly Review*, 1905, p. 457.

localities.<sup>1</sup> Not only does the *intichiuma* totemism flow naturally from the savage conception of things, but it accounts for multiplex totems;<sup>2</sup> while the totem as an article of trade becomes the eponymous ancestor of the group, and so overshadows in the mind of the native the facts of his daily experience as to make him forget the procreative functions of his father and substitute a mystic theory of conception.<sup>3</sup>

Within the capacity of the author the theory is made consistent and plausible. "My hypothesis," says Lang, "does not, I think, involve anything impossible or far-fetched, or incapable of proof in a general way. It is human, it is inevitable, that plant and animal names should be given, especially among groups more or less hostile. We call the French 'frogs.' It is also a fact that names given from without come to be accepted. It is a fact that names, once accepted, are explained by myths; it is a fact that myths come to be believed, and that belief influences behaviour."<sup>4</sup> Lured by the simplicity and naturalness of their theory, some authors are not satisfied with the local interpretation it yields, but extend its application to other times and places. To speak once more with Frazer: "This theory of conception is, on the principles of savage thought, so simple and obvious, that it may well have occurred to men independently in many parts of the world. Thus we could understand the wide prevalence of totemism among the distant races without being forced to suppose that they had borrowed it from each other."<sup>5</sup> Anything but that! While the possibility of multiple origins is not even hinted at.

Long before the secret of the totem was revealed, Lang "felt that a clear and consistent working hypothesis of the origin of totemism was indispensable."<sup>6</sup> No doubt an even partial reconstruction of the development of totemism in any one community would be an invaluable asset to our comprehension of that phenomenon. Evidence like that now accumulating about the totemism of the Pacific coast may supply this need; but is it evidence of this character that the above theories of the origin of totemism lay before us? Not at all. The partly reconstructed past is not used to throw light on the present. The procedure adopted is rather the reverse. A feature salient in the totemic life of some community is seized upon only to be projected

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Fortnightly Review*, 1905, p. 454.

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, p. 849.

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, loc. cit., pp. 348-9.

<sup>4</sup> Lang: *Social Origins*, p. 188.

<sup>5</sup> Frazer, *Fortnightly Review*, 1905, p. 457.

<sup>6</sup> Lang: *Social Origins*, Introduction, p. viii.

into the remote past and made the starting-point of the totemic process. The intermediary stages and "secondary" features are supplied from local evidence, by analogy with other communities, or in accordance "with recognized rules of evolution and of logic."<sup>1</sup> Forgetting that evolution is wayward, and logic not to be identified with history, the origin and development thus arrived at are then used as principles of interpretation of the present conditions.

Need we insist that such ways of attacking the problem of totemism are methodologically inadmissible? There is no warrant for assuming a feature now prominent to be the original feature of the system. We have no more right to assume that the *intichiuma* ceremonies or the conception beliefs of the Arunta were the source of their totemism than we have to place at the root of North-West totemism the decorative art now so profusely developed. True, animal names are common in totemic groups; but does it follow that the question: "How did the early groups come to be named after the plants and animals?" is the "real" problem?<sup>2</sup> Would not Lang have admitted that other features may also have been the starting-point, such as animal taboos, or a belief in descent from an animal, or primitive hunting-regulations, or what not? I am sure that Lang who was such an adept at following the Logos,<sup>3</sup> could without much effort have constructed a theory of totemism with any one of these elements to start with — a theory as consistent with fact, logic, and the mind of primitive man as is the theory of names "accepted from without."

The next step in the reasoning — a rigid deduction of the other features from the original one — is equally unjustifiable; for it involves the assumption of an organic unity of the features of totemism, an assumption here shown to be untenable. It also involves the assumption of a uniform law of development. We may not dwell here on this important point; it suffices to note that evidence from various lines of ethnological research tends to accentuate the danger of assuming such uniformities. The same warning applies with still greater emphasis to the habit of making general issues of special issues locally elaborated.

There remains another fundamental objection. Most of the authors, in their introductions and casual statements, admit that primitive conditions do not preclude borrowing and diffusion, assimilation and

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<sup>1</sup> Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Lang: *Social Origins*, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, Introduction, p. x.

secondary association of cultural elements. The facts thus recognized are, however, promptly laid aside when theories of origin and development are being attempted. The state of conceptual isolation thus forced upon local groups is never duplicated in the actual life of communities. The historical process is ever at work, and will be taken account of. What underlying laws or similarities may yet be disclosed we are not in a position to say without much further progress in the factual study of the history of "prehistory."

Of the two areas selected for detailed analysis, one, the Pacific coast, has yielded tolerably reliable information on a number of instructive historical processes. To these we may now turn.

The case of the Shuswap is of special interest. The southern Shuswap were divided into bands, each with its hereditary chief.<sup>1</sup> There was no nobility, nor were there privileged classes, clans, societies, totems, or origin traditions. The majority of persons in this tribe bore hereditary personal names, "many of them of long standing." Persons of one band, or even those of one division, were seldom known by the same name; in different divisions, however, and in neighbouring tribes, many persons with the same name could be found. It was held here (as among the Thompson) that such persons had inherited their name from a common ancestor.

Among the western Shuswap a totally different social organization comes to light. The people were divided into three classes: nobles, common people, and slaves.<sup>2</sup> The nobility had special privileges and generally married within their class. Social position was hereditary in both male and female lines. From the nobility came the hereditary chiefs of the bands which in some ways were more like clans. The nobles were divided into strictly hereditary crest groups. While no origin traditions were current, the originators of the social groups were held to have obtained the crests through initiation, like the novices of secret societies. Crests could not be acquired by marriage. Children, both male and female, inherited the crest which was carved or painted on the house. "The people dwelling in the house were supposed to stand in some kind of relation to the crest, perhaps to be simply under its protection." The bands were probably exogamous. The conditions prevailing in the nobility were duplicated among the common people. These were divided into groups or bands most of which were not strictly hereditary, although the father's group was

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<sup>1</sup> Teit: *The Shuswap*, pp. 570 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 576.

preferred. The Black Bear band, and some others which contained only common people, were more strictly hereditary. Teit enumerates twenty-nine protectors of these bands, of which twenty were animals. Some groups which were closely associated had the right to perform each other's dances and sing the same songs.

The crest groups seem to have cross-cut the hereditary groups of the nobility,<sup>1</sup> so that any individual, whether commoner or noble, could belong to any of the crest groups. The latter then appear to have been analogous to the dancing societies of the east and west. Each crest group had its distinct dresses, ornaments, songs, and dances. While these could take place at any time, they were generally performed in the winter. In character these dances were quite similar to those of the coast tribes. In some cases the performers "impersonated the moose, caribou, elk, and deer; the persons acting dressed in the skins of these animals, with the scalp part hanging over their head and face. Some had antlers attached to the head and neck. Others assisted in the acting. The dancers went through all the actions of the animal impersonated, imitating its feeding, and fishing, hunting and snaring, chasing over lakes in canoes, and final capture or death." At dances the performers bore the name of their crest or of the animal they represented; and at potlatches the givers and receivers were, individually and collectively, called by their crests.<sup>2</sup>

In all this we recognize the social transformation of the Kwakiutl, on a reduced scale.

The social organization of the western Shuswap as here outlined, is easily perceived to be closely similar to that of the coast tribes in all main features, and in many details. This type of organization, let us note, is found only among the western Shuswap, while the southern branch of the tribe preserves the loose village organization of the interior Salish. For this reason, supported by other evidence here omitted, there can be no doubt that the present social organization of the western Shuswap is not indigenous with them, but was borrowed from the Carrier, Chilcotin, and Lillooet, who in turn had adopted it from the tribes of the Pacific coast.<sup>3</sup>

The case of the Lillooet themselves is highly suggestive. The Lillooet bands were divided into clans. It seems that originally all the people of one village regarded themselves as descended from one

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<sup>1</sup> Teit: *The Shuswap*, p. 577.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 582.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 581.

ancestor, as indicated by a single origin tradition. It is almost certain, therefore, that in the remote past each village community consisted of a single clan.<sup>1</sup> What we know about the class of chiefs among this people supports the conclusion. Each clan had a hereditary chief. His children and grandchildren were called "chief's children," thus constituting an aristocracy of descent, but no privileges were attached to their social position. The hereditary chief stood at the head of the families comprised in a village. Even though spread over several villages, the members of a clan recognized one common chief, who resided at the original home of the clan. In a village with several clans, the chief of the original clan was the head chief.<sup>2</sup>

The clans of the Lillooet were not exogamous. "There were no restrictions regarding marriages between members of different classes, clans, and villages, except near relationship." The clans bore animal names and traced their descent from the eponymous animals.<sup>3</sup> A man could not become a member of his wife's clan;<sup>4</sup> but children belonged to the clans of both father and mother, for "by blood they were members of both clans."<sup>5</sup> At dances masks were used which represented the ancestor of the clan or referred to some important incident in his life.

The language of the Lillooet is closely allied to that of the Thompson; in culture and daily life there is the closest resemblance between the two groups of tribes; in such characteristics as children's names derived from ancestors, as well as names of men and women, there is practical identity. But the Thompson have loose bands instead of clans, no totems, no belief in descent from animals, no hereditary nobility, etc.; whereas the Lillooet, who possess all these features excepting only totemic descent, share them with the coast tribes. There can thus be no doubt as to the foreign character of the social organization of the Lillooet, nor as to the source of its development. The influence of the coast can, moreover, be traced step by step, as we proceed

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<sup>1</sup> Teit: *The Lillooet*, p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Teit's statement that "none of the Salish tribes of the interior that have remained uninfluenced by the coast tribes consider any of their families descended from animals or mythic beings" (*ibid.*, p. 295, note 3).

<sup>4</sup> The statement that a man could not become a member of his wife's clan suggests that she did not—at least not as a rule—belong to his clan. This implies clan exogamy, though not necessarily categorical, a condition to be expected in the presence of an extended system of marriage restrictions based on relationship.

<sup>5</sup> This truly "unheard-of" condition, for a totemic community, would, in the absence of other evidence, in itself suffice as proof that the clan system of the Lillooet was an importation.



from the Lower Lillooet westward towards the tribes of the Pacific border.<sup>1</sup>

The curious transformations in the organization of the Bella Coola were referred to before. The social organization of the coast tribes has also affected the neighbouring groups of the Athapascan stock. The Chilcotin, neighbours of the Bella Coola, Kwakiutl, and southern Salish, share with them their paternal descent, which is also characteristic of the Athapascan peoples; while the Carrier have a maternal organization, like their neighbours, the Tsimshian.<sup>2</sup> But the process of diffusion was much more fundamental, for it transformed the entire social organization of the western Athapascans. A hereditary nobility, the potlatch, a totemic clan system, clan exogamy, are all traits foreign to the eastern Athapascans, but found among their western congeners in common with the peoples of the coast;<sup>3</sup> and, suggestively enough, the Carrier have four clans (phratries) like the Tsimshian, while the Tahltan, like the Tlingit, have two.<sup>4</sup>

An interesting case of influence through contact has occurred among the Kwakiutl who adhere to female descent, combined with unmistakable indications of a former descent through the father. All evi-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hill-Tout: "The Salish Tribes of the Coast and Lower Frazer Delta," *Annual Archaeological Report*, Toronto, p. 226.

By a curious play of circumstances, a full-fledged belief in descent from the totem is found among the Lillooet. We can only guess at the origin of this feature, but the process suggested before seems at least plausible. As the clan of the coast fused with the village community of the interior, the clan crest became identified with the human ancestor of the villagers; thus the clansmen came to believe in their descent from the eponymous animal.

A stray traveller, ignorant of local conditions, would probably have described the Lillooet as a community organized along the lines of classical totemism; he would have mentioned totemic clans with animal names and descent from the totem; clan exogamy, possibly in a state of decay; totemic taboos, traces of which he could have easily discerned in the many prohibitions against the killing and eating of certain animals prevalent in that area. If not for such facts as the paternal and maternal inheritance of clan membership, which might have set our traveller on the right track, he could hardly have suspected that what to him appeared as classical totemism was really due to the engrafting of a heretical totemism upon a non-totemic community.

<sup>2</sup> Morice: "Are the Carrier Sociology and Mythology Indigenous or Exotic?" *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Vol. X, Sec. 2 (1892) p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 112-13; and "The Canadian Déné," *Annual Archaeological Report*, Toronto, 1906, p. 203.

<sup>4</sup> Swanton: "The Development of the Clan System and of Secret Societies among the North-western Tribes," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. VI, N.S. (1904), p. 478. (The statement about the Tahltan is quoted from Callbreath.) Until further evidence is forthcoming, we need not follow Swanton in his attempt to trace the origin of the clan organization of the tribes of the North-West to a "small section of coast on Hecate Strait" (ibid., p. 481). If his conjecture should stand the test of more thorough inquiry, it would certainly be most interesting to find a clan system originating from intermarriages between three, or possibly two, tribes—the Tlingit and the Haida (ibid., p. 482).

dence speaks against female descent as original among the Kwakiutl. In the village communities in which the present organization of the Kwakiutl found its source, the people were always designated as the direct descendants of a mythical ancestor, while under a system of maternal descent they would, of course, have been designated as the descendants of the ancestor's sister, as is the case among the northern tribes. Another fact pointing in the same direction is the paternal inheritance of certain offices connected with the winter ceremonies. Each dance can be obtained only through marriage or by killing the owner; but such offices as the Master of Ceremonies, or the Care-taker of the drum, the batons, the eagle-down, etc., are hereditary in the male line. In view of the great antiquity of these ceremonies among the Kwakiutl, the latter fact provides strong evidence in favour of a former prevalence of paternal descent. The way itself in which maternal inheritance of social position and privileges is now secured corroborates the above conclusion. Through marriage a man acquires the position and privileges of his father-in-law; he cannot use them himself, however, but must keep them for his son. The father-in-law similarly acquired them, through the medium of his wife, from his father-in-law, etc. The law of descent is maternal, but with the husband as intermediary. Thus the form of paternal inheritance is preserved, while what is inherited really comes from the mother — a condition likely to occur in a tribe passing from paternal to maternal descent. The cause of this change in descent among the Kwakiutl we must see in the maternal organization of the northern tribes, and in the development in the Kwakiutl clans of origin traditions analogous to those of the north.<sup>1</sup>

The diffusion of the social organization of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, to the east and south, is paralleled by the northward spread of the secret societies which find their highest development among the Kwakiutl. The similarity of the performances, in general character as well as in detail, among all these tribes proves conclusively that they are derived from one source. Not only are the dances and decorations similar or identical, but the names of the ceremonials or of parts of them, are practically the same. The only tribe of this area where the names of the ceremonials cannot be derived from the same terms are the Bella Coola, but among them the ceremonial itself is almost exactly like that of the Kwakiutl. Now, all these names are Kwakiutl words; while among the Bella Coola, where the names of the ceremonials are

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, pp. 334-5, 431.

different, the names of the dancers are often borrowed from the Kwakiutl. We need not, of course, conclude that no secret societies existed among the northern tribes prior to the developments which led to the modern conditions — the opposite is, in fact, probable, — but the present character of these societies must have been determined by Kwakiutl influences.<sup>1</sup>

The historical processes which determined the present character of the mythology of the Pacific coast were no less complex. The myth of the Raven as transformer, which was indigenous with the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, spread southward along the coast and occurs among the Newetsee in a practically complete form. The myth travelled still farther, but not without undergoing modification and losing many of the incidents which belong to it in the north. We still find it among the Bella Coola, with a greatly reduced number of incidents. Some elements of the Raven myth seem, on the other hand, to be of southern origin and to have spread northward. Such is, for instance, the incident of the Raven unable to reciprocate the hospitality of his guests. The myth has a wide distribution in North America: it occurs among the Chinook, the Omaha and Ponca, the Ojibwa, and the Micmac. In British Columbia it is told in its most complete form by the Comox; but fragments of it occur among the Newetsee and farther south.<sup>2</sup> Fragments of the Deluge myth, which is at home on the Mississippi and common throughout the East, are found among the Newetsee where separate elements of that myth were incorporated in the Raven myth.<sup>3</sup> And, once more, the myths and legends of the coast tribes have affected those of the neighbouring Athapaskan peoples.<sup>4</sup>

Another typical North-West fixture, the potlatch, has radiated in several directions: it has travelled from the coast to the Athapaskan

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Kwakiutl*, pp. 660-4. It is curious to see how evidence of borrowing or diffusion — which, were the people in question "civilized," would be accepted without hesitation — fails to carry conviction when "primitive" conditions are concerned. Processes of borrowing, imitation, diffusion, are with us facts of daily experience and cannot be denied, while laws of development must take care of themselves. In conditions, on the other hand, where historical reconstruction is but seldom possible and must at best be assisted by minute analysis and comparison of data, there is always room for rejecting the evidence, however strong. Here the evolutionist likes to fall back upon his sweeping theory of an ordered development, while disposing of a host of unruly facts as exceptions, anomalies, disturbing influences, etc. (cf. Breysig: *Die Geschichte der Menschheit*, Vol. I, pp. 142-3 sqq.). [When this was written (1910), the dogma of evolution was still rampant. In twenty-two years the picture has changed. Evolutionism is no longer a power, nor a menace. Instead we have an equally uncritical dogma in the diffusionism of such writers as Graebner, the *late* Rivers, and G. Elliot Smith (cf. pp. 143-52) *A. G.*]

<sup>2</sup> Boas: *Indianische Sagen*, pp. 333-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 336-7.

<sup>4</sup> Morice: "Are the Carrier . . ." etc., p. 113.

tribes, has spread northward to the Alaskan Eskimos, and also southward to Columbia River.<sup>1</sup>

The high development of the semi-realistic art of the coast was discussed before. On the outskirts of this area traces of foreign influence occur. The spruce-root basketry decorations of the Alaskan Tlingit resemble the porcupine-quill designs of the Athapascan tribes, while the geometrical basketry designs of the southern Nootka are related to the geometrical designs of the basketry of the Washington coast.<sup>2</sup>

Methods of burial furnish some interesting examples. The Athapascan peoples dispose of their dead by placing the corpse on poles several feet above the ground. The Carrier, however, and the Babine cremate their dead, like their neighbours, the Tsimshian; while the Chilcotin inter them, like the Shuswap.<sup>3</sup>

Other illustrations could be adduced in the field of material culture, but let one suffice. The northern Carrier and Nahane build large wooden lodges, with gable roofs and log or pole walls, in common with the Tlingit and Tsimshian; while the southern Carrier and the Chilcotin live, like the Shuswap, in semi-subterranean houses.<sup>4</sup>

The objection is sometimes made that the tribes of the coast are "advanced," that we are not dealing here with primitive conditions, that what occurs among these tribes is not what we could expect among really primitive "savages," etc.<sup>5</sup> To a certain extent the objection is valid and may well be kept in mind as a note of warning against hasty analogies. Our main point at issue, however, can in no way be affected by such considerations. We have indicated rather than described the great complexity of the processes by means of which the tribes of the Pacific coast have come to be what they now are, in social organization, religion, material culture. The intensive and prolonged researches conducted by a number of trained observers among these tribes of the north Pacific border have shown with great clearness that only by taking into account historical development, as well as the exact social influences to which each tribe is subjected, can we hope to interpret the present conditions with any degree of exactness. No amount of insight into psychological probabilities, into the constitution of the

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<sup>1</sup> Boas: *Tribes of the North Pacific Coast*, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>3</sup> Morice: "The Canadian Déné," pp. 199-200.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197; and "Are the Carrier . . ." etc., p. 120.

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, Appendix, p. 213.

human mind in general and that of primitive man in particular, would in the least assist us to reconstruct the development of these tribes, unless we also possessed the knowledge above indicated. That these conditions should be due to the fact that the tribes of the North-West are "advanced" cannot be admitted. The distinction between the American situation and that, for instance, of Australia consists essentially in the fact that, whereas American students were fortunate enough to ascertain the past in the concrete, before all traces of it had disappeared, the work along similar lines in Australia has so far made but little headway. But even apart from general analogies with other areas, specific indications are not lacking in Australia both of the influence of tribe on tribe and culture on culture, and of the means by which the influence was effected. The great similarity, or even identity, of social organization over immense areas points unmistakably towards a spread of types of organization from a few centres. The identity or similarity of names for social divisions suggests another, not necessarily contemporaneous, process of diffusion. Spencer and Gillen, as well as Howitt,<sup>1</sup> speak of tribal gatherings at which customs, traditions, ceremonies, became disseminated among the members of widely separated tribes. They speak of conscious borrowing and lending. But the unconscious influences must have been far more numerous and far-reaching. Roth describes the process of diffusion of corrobories. "It may thus come to pass," he writes, "and almost invariably does, that a tribe will learn and sing by rote whole corrobories in a language absolutely remote from its own, and not one word of which the audience or performers can understand the meaning of."<sup>2</sup> Roth proceeds to recount some cases that came under his observation. He outlines in some detail the trade-routes followed by beliefs and material objects in their wanderings from one locality to another.

I do not hesitate to predict that further research in Australia will show that the interactions of cultural elements within each group are as intricate as are those between tribe and tribe. The conditions would then be analogous to those of the North-West.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Native Tribes*, p. 281, and *Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 511-12.

<sup>2</sup> Roth: *North Queensland Ethnography*, pp. 107-8; also Lang: *Secret of the Totem*, p. 3.

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## II

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### The Origin of Totemism



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## II

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### The Origin of Totemism

OF THE MANY THEORIES ADVANCED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE origin of totemism, some were good, in so far as they indicated a plausible starting-point for the totemic process; but all were bad in their pretension to have revealed the one and only starting-point of totemism. Hill-Tout, as we saw, regarded the religious aspect of the totem as the trait it had in common with the individual guardian spirit and the animal protector of a religious society; and he also held this religious element to be the only constant feature of totemism and was thus prompted to seek for the origin of the institution in the individual guardian spirit. He succeeded in making out a fairly good case for his theory in so far as it referred to the suliaism of the Salish tribes of the interior of British Columbia. Haddon's hypothesis also, as well as the similar one by Pater Schmidt of which we spoke before, need not be discarded as impossible. Among the Penobscot Indians, for example, there existed a regulation of hunting according to localities and animals, a condition approximating Haddon's idea of the origin of totemism. That animal taboos restricted to definite clans or localities should have been the first step in totemism no one to my knowledge has maintained. Yet this hypothesis would have been as acceptable as any of the others. The prominence of the taboo aspect of totemism among many African Bantu tribes, especially such features as the paternal taboo totems of the Herero, Bawili, Tshi, and Bushongo, would support the claim of the as yet unadvocated taboo theory of the origin of totemism to a hearing on a par with other theories. Then there is Andrew Lang's theory, which derives totemism from animal and plant names given to social groups, originally local aggregates, later clans. Animal group names are, indeed, so common a feature of modern as well as primitive society, and the presence of such names in totemic tribes is such a frequent feature of the latter, that Lang's theory, while also at fault in



its universalist pretensions, is perhaps more nearly right in advancing this claim than any of the other theories.

At this stage of the discussion it will be well to remember that when we speak of a particular feature as constituting the origin of totemism, all we may mean is that this particular feature appeared first in a social organization which later developed into a totemic complex. Totemic complexes could not have come into being full-grown, with all their religious, social, mythological, ceremonial, and artistic features. The features must have been acquired one by one or, at most, in small sets. The crest and rank qualities of the North-West "totems," for example, bear unmistakable evidence of late origin; while of the features just reviewed each may have appeared before the others in a number of instances.

Apart from this chronological priority, no significance should be attached to the assertion that a certain feature was the origin of totemism. These origins are not embryonic totemic complexes carrying within them the potentialities of future development. Nor do they throw any light on the specific psychological conditions, the particular atmosphere of thought and emotion on the basis of which a totemic organization may spring up. Such origins as those of Lang, Frazer, Haddon, and Hill-Tout, are nothing but starting-points. And it goes without saying that piling up further stages, so as to bridge the gap between the assumed origin and an actual live totemic complex, is merely multiplying difficulties; for the origin hypothesis is thus deprived of that basis of probability which may often be granted to the "origin" itself, in the sense of a starting-point.

Without overstepping the bounds of well-ascertained ethnological or, if you like, historical fact, we may insist that the growth of a totemic community, like that of any other institution, depends on the co-operation of so many different agents, both "inner" and "outer," and is coloured by so many unique, individual happenings that any attempt to reconstruct the process in its concreteness on a hypothetical foundation is nothing short of foolhardy.

Thus arises the question: Has the ingenuity exercised in the excogitation of totemic origin theories, with their impressive baggage of fact, analogy, and suggestion, been repaid by the results? No one who has followed totemic discussions for the last quarter of a century or so will hesitate to answer this question in the negative. Our comprehension of totemic phenomena has not been enhanced by these origin theories; at best they have proved of indirect value by stimulating to-

temic research. The futility of hunting for first origins, whether totemic or not, can best be realized if one imagines for a moment that all first origins of human institutions were revealed. These would no doubt present a sensational picture, full of local colour and whimsicality, of improbabilities, and even of "impossibilities." But one may well doubt the scientific value of such a revelation. First origins are a matter of "chance," they are unique individual events presenting at best a gossipy interest. The search for first origins, like the search of the alchemist, is vain.<sup>1</sup>

Without challenging the above proposition as to all hypothetical reconstructions of specific chains of events, we may suspect that all totemic processes may be reducible to some general and fundamental principle. The discovery of such a principle would further our comprehension of totemic phenomena, while supplying a valuable guide for the study of totemic processes still available for first-hand research.

I propose in what follows to direct attention to the presence of such a principle. Let us remember that a totemic complex rests upon a sib system in which each sib, while homologous to the others in form and functions, differs from them in specific totemic content.<sup>2</sup> Can it be conceived that these totemic features developed in the different clans independently? When one considers that the sibs of a totemic complex are so interwoven as to constitute, to all appearances, an integral system, and that the homology of the clans is objectively, for the observer, as well as subjectively, for the totemite, the most patent fact about a totemic organization, one cannot but realize that any such series of independent developments lies entirely beyond the range of probability. If, then, the assumption of the independent development of totemic sib features is rejected, we must adopt the alternative assumption of a process of diffusion. Also, the totemic features cannot be regarded as a contemporaneous growth: as regards the order of their appearance in a totemic complex, the features must be conceived

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<sup>1</sup> It will be noticed that throughout this discussion totemism is assumed to have been of polygenetic origin. The reasons for this view have been presented elsewhere (see pp. 306 sqq.). In an article on the origin of exogamy (*Archiv für Rechts- und Wirtschaftsphilosophie*, April 1912), as well as in his *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie*, Wundt insists that the remarkable similarity of totemic phenomena all over the world, as disclosed particularly by Frazer's survey, inevitably leads to the assumption of an essential unity of totemic institutions. But this similarity may also be due to convergence under the directing influence of such a factor as the tendency for specific socialization (cf. my "Totemism and Exogamy defined: a Rejoinder," *American Anthropologist*, 1911, p. 596; and "Andrew Lang on Method in the Study of Totemism," *American Anthropologist*, 1912, p. 384).

<sup>2</sup> *American Anthropologist*, 1912, p. 384.

of as a temporal series. Guided by these two assumptions, we may now visualize the totemic process at an extremely early stage of its growth

The tribe is differentiated into a number of social units or sibs. The psychic atmosphere (Thurnwald's *Denkart*) is saturated with totemic possibilities.<sup>1</sup> The stage is set for a first origin of totemism. Most totemic origin theories may claim the right of supplying one, but with them we are not here concerned. A first origin — animal name taboo, sacred animal, myth of descent, what not — is assumed to have occurred in one sib, or perhaps in a few sibs. Still there is no totemism. But presently, psychological conditions remaining favourable, another sib adopts the feature. Then another and another. Finally all the sibs have it. The features in the various sibs are not identical, but they are equivalent, and they become specific sib characteristics — become socialized. The totemic process has begun.<sup>2</sup> In the same way other features begin to develop. They may arise in one or another sib through "inner" growth, or they may come from the outside, through contact with other tribes. No sooner is a new feature evolved or adopted by a sib than it starts on its round of diffusion, until all the sibs have incorporated it. Thus the totemic organization grows and increases in complexity. Meanwhile each feature in a sib stands for functional solidarity, and as the number of features multiplies, the solidarity increases. On the other hand, the homology of the sibs also gains in complexity and completeness, until the realization of such homology — at first, no doubt, unconscious — may arise in the consciousness of the totemites. It need not be assumed that a new feature always appears in the same sib, but it does not seem improbable that such a tendency should develop. One sib or several sibs may thus assume the role of setting totemic fashion.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Over fifty years ago Andrew Lang pointed out that totemism must have arisen in a psychic atmosphere congenial to its inception and growth. In a paper read before the British Association for the Advancement of Science (Portsmouth, 1911; see abstract in *Man*, October 1911) I referred to the analysis of the psycho-sociological conditions underlying totemism as the ultimate and most fundamental of totemic problems. The theoretical principles involved in all such problems were ably discussed by Lévy-Bruhl in his *How Natives Think*, while a first constructive attempt in this direction, with reference to specifically totemic studies, was made by Thurnwald (see his "Die Denkart als Wurzel des Totemismus," *Korrespondenzblatt der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*, Vol. XLII, pp. 173-9).

<sup>2</sup> It must further be noted that the diffusion of the feature does not here proceed from individual to individual merely; which is, indeed, the way in which every custom spreads through a community. The individuals, to be sure, are the ultimate units exercising the functions for which the totemic features stand. But the diffusion of totemic features proceeds from sib to sib; and the individuals of each sib, when their turn arrives, adopt, not the feature itself, but its homologue.

<sup>3</sup> It ought to be possible, even at this late hour, to ascertain in how far this conception is justified by actual happenings in totemic communities.

In the early days of a totemic complex the diffusion of a new feature throughout the social system must be a slow process. But as each sib consolidates through the continuous superposition of common functions, and as the homology of the sibs becomes more impressive with the addition of every new feature, this process of diffusion must become increasingly rapid and smooth. As feature upon feature springs up in one or another sib, their spread to other sibs becomes a traditionally approved procedure, and the course and direction of the diffusion may also become fixed and stereotyped.<sup>1</sup>

The central point of the above theory of the origin of totemism lies in the conception that the building-up of a totemic complex consists in a series of totemic features which appear one by one (or possibly in small groups), spread from sib to sib, become socialized in the sibs and absorbed in the complex. Each new feature, on its appearance in a sib, becomes a pattern presently followed by other sibs until the wave of diffusion has swept over them all. The theory may thus be fitly called the *pattern theory* of the origin of totemism. It may be regarded as a compromise between the views of those whose thirst for interpretation cannot be quenched by anything save a first origin, and of those others who do not believe in *any* hypothetical reconstructions. Attempts at reconciliation by compromise are seldom successful in science, and the theory seems doomed to rejection by both camps. I may therefore be permitted to emphasize the two aspects of the

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<sup>1</sup> A reader conversant with the subject will probably have observed that the assumption of a pre-existing sib system at the inception of a totemic complex could not be justified on the same ground as the assumption of a first origin. The procedure is, indeed, artificial. The totemic process may be conceived as antedating, at least in part, the formation of a hard-and-fast sib system, and having its roots in the loose local organization out of which most sib systems must have sprung. In the course of social evolution the transformation of such loose local groups into sib systems must have occurred innumerable times. With increasing solidarity the local groups would gradually assume the character of at first vague social units. Through intercourse and intermarriage between the groups, with or without exogamy, the individuals of the groups would become distributed in the different localities. Thus a foundation would be laid for a sib system, which in time would become fixed and rigid.

It is by no means improbable that in certain cases the totemic process began while the groups still had their original local character. The process, to be sure, must have been an exceedingly slow one. The multiplication of features, the consolidation of each group, the rise of a sense of equivalence between the groups—these are aspects of the totemic process that could not have found in local communities the materials and stimulus for totemic transformations. In sib systems, on the other hand, these factors are generously supplied. In the course of the local redistribution of the groups referred to above, the totemic features and tendencies may, however, have proved powerful agents in furthering the differentiation and consolidation of sibs; whereupon the process would assume the character outlined in the text. The totemic processes, moreover, one before, the other after the formation of a sib system, would not differ in principle, but rather in the rapidity and smoothness of development. These remarks, therefore, may serve as an amplification of the theory propounded in the text, without modifying the latter in any essential particular.

theory which, in my opinion, should commend it to the attention of totemizing ethnologists. Being convinced that the search for first origins is a vain pursuit, I eliminate from my theory all assumption as to the specific character of a first origin of totemism. I simply assume one. The second important aspect of the theory lies in the conception of waves of diffusion by which new features become distributed in the complex. This conception is purely hypothetical; it cannot, that is, be substantiated by anything we can actually demonstrate in totemic complexes, but it is supported by what we know of the psychology and mechanism of social processes. It seems, in fact, to formulate the only way in which a totemic complex can come into being.

The theory offers a ready explanation of various totemic "anomalies." When one finds that one totemic community has only animal totems, another only bird totems, the tendency is to look for deep-rooted causes. It cannot, of course, be denied that some peculiarity in the environment or beliefs of a group may lead to such special developments. The explanation, however, may also lie in the fact that in one community a few animal names, adopted by several sibs, fixed the pattern subsequently followed by other clans; while in another instance the same occurred with bird names. In still other numerous instances the character of the names did not become stereotyped until some animal, bird, and plant names had been given or adopted, resulting in the distribution of names most frequently found in totemic communities. Double totems, as among the Massim of New Guinea, can be accounted for in somewhat the same way. Not that double or quadruple totems need be assumed to have constituted the primary condition in any community. In the early stages of their development these totemic complexes may have had the normal one-sib one-totem aspect. But presently some unconventional "cause" doubled the totems in one or a few sibs; other sibs followed suit; and so on.

It will, I trust, be seen that the pattern theory may be regarded as a theory of the origin of totemism only in so far as it represents an attempt to suggest in most general terms a mechanism by means of which "no totemism" or merely a totemic "first origin" may become transformed into a totemic complex.

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### III

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## Form and Content in Totemism



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## Form and Content in Totemism

IN HIS "THE ORIGIN OF TOTEMISM" <sup>1</sup> DR. FRANZ BOAS ENDORSES some of my positions as expressed in *Totemism, An Analytical Study* and "The Origin of Totemism." That totemism always appears as a tribal complex of social units disparate in content, but functionally homologous, is confirmed in the assertion: "Common to totemism in the narrower sense of the term is the view that sections of a tribal unit composed of relatives, or supposed relatives, possess each certain definite customs which differ in content from those of other similar sections of the same tribal unit, but agree with them in form or pattern." <sup>2</sup>

In no uncertain terms the author condemns such writers as Wundt and Durkheim for over-stressing the so-called "identification of man and animals" involved in totemism. Writes Dr. Boas: "It appears to me, therefore, an entirely different problem that is treated by these authors, a problem interesting and important in itself, but one which has little bearing upon the question of totemism as a social institution. Their problem deals with the development of the concepts referring to the relation of man to nature, which is obviously quite distinct from that of the characterization of kinship groups. The only connection between the two problems is that the concepts referring to the relation of man to nature are applied for the purpose of characterizing social, more particularly kinship groups." <sup>3</sup>

While two of my positions are thus seen to be supported by Dr. Boas, the last sentence of the above-quoted statement implies an endorsement of the position taken in 1910, while registering a disagreement with my later attitude. For Dr. Boas's statement condemns all specification of totemic content, regarding any particular content as significant for totemism, not intrinsically, but only through its asso-

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<sup>1</sup> *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XVI (1916).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 323.



ciation with social units. At another place Dr. Boas says: "I consider it inadvisable to draw a rigid line between totemic phenomena in a still more limited sense — namely, in so far as the characteristics of tribal exogamic sections deal with the relations of man to animals and plants — but believe that we should study all the customs connectedly, in their weaker form as well as in their most marked totemic forms."<sup>1</sup>

The variability of content in totemic complexes in different areas leads Dr. Boas to still another conclusion. He writes: "Since the contents of totemism as found in various parts of the world show such important differences, I do not believe that all totemic phenomena can be derived from the same psychological or historical sources. Totemism is an artificial, not a natural unit."<sup>2</sup>

The two theoretical issues implied in the above quotation having thus come to a head, it seems desirable to elucidate the problem somewhat further.

It may be noted, at the outset, that the issue is not one of definition or terminology. Is the content of totemic phenomena to be regarded as of no consequence or of specific significance? Is the unity of totemic phenomena to be disposed of as an abstraction, as something "artificial, not natural," or is this unity in some sense real and therefore significant, psychologically and historically? Patently, these questions cannot be settled by a definition or a term, but are of real import in a theory of totemism.

The propositions to which we now turn are these: (1) the specific content of totemism, in so far as certain attitudes towards nature play so conspicuous a part in it, is not adventitious but significant; and (2) without embodying a new principle inapplicable to other cultural features, totemism is nevertheless a specific institution, deserving as such a separate concept and term.

Let us discuss the second proposition first. That the presence of supernaturalism in totemism is, as such, nothing distinctive scarcely needs further elucidation; for supernaturalism, as nature worship, is as universal as primitive religion itself. Further than this, all the

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<sup>1</sup> *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XVI (1916), p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321. Cf. with the above Professor Boas's latest statement on totemism, in his article, "Anthropology," in the *Encyclopædia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. II: "Conditions of this kind" (that is, "when the unity of the later generations is preserved by a common name or by some other symbol") "are generally designated as totemism. The totemites share a name, a symbol, beliefs or rites." It will be seen that in this highly abbreviated statement the author endorses, no doubt without intent, the postulates with which the present article begins.

special attitudes towards things or beings in nature, such as kinship with them, descent from them, common traits with them, the appearance of such things and beings as omens, protectors, etc., are common enough outside of totemism.<sup>1</sup> Nor is the social organization with which the totemic content is associated in itself totemic: while the great majority of clan systems appear as carriers of totemic complexes, there are exceptions which, though rare, are frequent enough not to be negligible.

The particular form of socialization of various features which appears in totemism is, as we know, also found in different kinds of societies, non-kinship associations of a military, medicinal, religious nature. In all of these, as in totemism, the different social units—societies here, not sibs—are differentiated in specific content, while functionally homologous. In many instances this aspect alone provides an analogue to the totemic situation, while the features themselves, in their concrete content, are quite different. But in religious societies such as those of the American South-West and North-West, of west Africa and northern Melanesia, the content itself is often strikingly similar to that found in totemic complexes.<sup>2</sup> All tribal sets of societies, moreover, represent, like totemic complexes, closely knit aggregates of features of historically heterogeneous provenience. It is certain, then, that each and all of the characteristics of totemic complexes find their replicas outside of that content.

The analytical treatment of the totemic complex, then, seems to deprive it of all individuality in specific composition, principle of organization, or historical perspective. In my opinion, this result points to the limitations of a purely analytical approach. A very different light is thrown on the situation with the introduction of a historico-geographical standpoint. In this view the central feature is the association of the totemic complex with a sib system. An examination of the theoretical relation of such a system and a tribal set of religious

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<sup>1</sup> The same, of course, applies to the other elements of the totemic content, religious, æsthetic, economic, etc., all of which in the typical and most common instances appear as correlated with certain attitudes towards nature (cf. "Totemism, an Analytical Study," this volume, pp. 213 sqq.).

<sup>2</sup> It may also be noted that the classificatory aspect of totemism (cf. Boas: "The Origin of Totemism," *American Anthropologist*, 1916, p. 326) is another feature not to be identified with totemism alone. We recall such phenomena as college banners and pins, automobile insignia, regimental flags and mascots, street names, and—to mention a recent instance—the names of British tanks in the World War. In all of these instances, including the totemic ones, the psychological as well as logical requirements of the classificatory situation call for the use of a variety of things, names, symbols, which, in each instance, provide a set of individually different designations belonging to the same category.

societies has been undertaken before.<sup>1</sup> The conclusion of the analysis ran as follows: The two institutions are somewhat conspicuously co-extensive in geographical distribution; they present striking similarities in point of cultural content and suggest from the theoretical standpoint a set of similar problems. But it will be profitable to keep them apart conceptually as well as for purposes of intensive study. The comparative study of totemic complexes and religious societies, on the other hand, promises to prove a most fascinating aspect of totemic research.

In the light of the above considerations totemism appears as descriptively distinctive, even though it presents no special or unique principle in its make-up. The distinctiveness lies in the association of the totemic content with a sib system. If we are to estimate rightly the historical bearing of totemism as a primitive institution, we must conceive of it as an all but universal adjunct of clan and gentile organizations. This association lends it its specific flavour; it accounts for its geographical distribution and, from another angle, for its place in history. For it must be remembered that hereditary kinship systems, clans and gentes, represent one of the two basic forms of primitive social organization, the other being the family-village form, which lacks hereditary social units. Clan and gentile systems have an enormous distribution in primitive culture areas, and with them goes an almost coextensive distribution of totemic complexes. If Tylor's concept of adhesion is applied here, the two phenomena are seen to adhere almost invariably, the instances of totemic complexes without supporting sib systems, or of sib systems without overlaying totemic complexes, being relatively rare. Thus the geographical distribution of the two features reveals the presence here of some deep-rooted organic determinant. If the contents of totemic complexes are so regularly drawn into the socializing meshes of sib systems, this must be due to a kind of inherent fitness. To this point we shall presently revert; but before this is done, a few words are due to the alleged artificiality of the concept "totemism."

The concept "totemism" is deemed artificial, not natural, for reasons partly of historical, partly of psycho-sociological order. The historical development of totemic complexes was different, hence they are genetically disparate and non-comparable; the concrete content of totemic complexes is highly variable, hence, from a socio-psychological

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 314 sqq.

or cultural standpoint, they are also disparate and non-comparable. The logical limit of this attitude is to regard the concept and term "totemism" as an unjustifiable abstraction based on a superficial knowledge of the comparative material or on a disregard of significant differences in this material. When these errors are rectified, the concept "totemism" may be expected to become obsolete, its place being taken by a number of less inclusive concepts which would conform more accurately to the concrete data. Behind the problems of local totemic complexes there lies no problem of totemism.

To meet this argument the following considerations may be adduced. It must, of course, be admitted that the specific processes which brought the individual totemic complexes into being must have varied greatly, in the features that developed, in the order of their development, in the time consumed by the processes of socialization and totemic assimilation, in the hundred and one ways in which in themselves trifling accidental happenings will influence and mould culture. This notwithstanding, these processes, when viewed in the synthesizing light of historical perspective, reveal certain not unimportant parallelisms. Thus, the undeniable similarities in the contents of totemic complexes must find their developmental counterpart in certain resemblances of the circumstances under which the similar features arose in the different complexes. Again, certain features are obviously more primitive than others, some derivatives of others; and so, whenever the two types of features appeared, certain similarities must have obtained in the relations of these features. Then again, the very processes of socialization and psychological assimilation of features, with all the disparity and individuality in special instances, comprise inevitably so many common conditions of a general socio-psychological kind that the mechanisms at work must also have been similar in many ways.

As to the variability of features in totemic complexes, it is, of course, very considerable.<sup>1</sup> And yet if the contrasts are set aside, a very respectable nucleus remains which recurs in a large number of instances. Among totemic features of enormously wide distribution the following may be mentioned: the idea of intimate relationship with the totem, whether in the form of descent, transformation, association, physical or psychic resemblance; the use of the totem as an eponym; the totem as a symbol, whether in art or as property mark or as a sign of rank.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., for instance, above, pp. 268 sqq.

And there are other features, only less common. The following assumption, finally, is justifiable, in my opinion: Granting that the variability of totemic phenomena, both in content and genetically, is sufficient to discourage any attempt at analogical evolutionary reconstruction in any specific instance, the similarities referred to above are such as to warrant the expectation that, were the separate lines of totemic evolution all brought to light, and cross-cuts of their contents made at different chronological levels, there would appear even greater general resemblances than those resulting from a comparison of the complexes now open to investigation.

It appears, then, that from an objective standpoint the contents of totemic complexes and the historical processes which brought them into being may not be regarded as wholly disparate. It is, however, questionable whether, in considering the alleged "artificiality" of the concept "totemism," the objective and genetic standpoints are the proper ones to take.

Many students of culture will admit that the true level for cultural comparisons is the psycho-sociological level to which the cultural values themselves belong. This position gains psychological support from the generally recognized fact that transvaluations in culture ever tend to play havoc with genetic similarities and differences. While the truth of this is admitted, comparisons of a psycho-sociological character rarely enjoy the prestige accorded to parallels based on genetic relationship. Now, while the latter standpoint is evidently in place in historical reconstructions, psycho-cultural interpretation must rely on material lying in the level of culture itself, the psycho-sociological level — here the genetic retrospect is irrelevant.

If this contention is brought to bear on our problem, it presently appears that the significant comparability of totemic complexes lies over and above the resemblances in their concrete contents, that this comparability, moreover, is independent of the above resemblances and might, indeed, persist in their absence. However totemic complexes may differ, they all represent totemic cultures to the men and women who are their psychological carriers. They represent totemic cultures, since they all partake of that specifically socialized supernaturalism which, while particularized in the varying clan contents, finds its synthesis in the pervading clan equivalence. This equivalence, rooted in the very nature of a clan system, manifests itself in the formal identity of totemic clan features, in the secondarily derived equivalence flowing from the functioning of these features, and, lastly,

in the cultural flavour or "feel" of the psychic or cultural level (*Denkart*). This psychological orientation makes a particular variety of supernaturalism and the particular type of its social transformation, congenial to certain societies and cultures. It is considerations such as these that make totemism appear as one of the most characteristic and sharply defined institutions of primitive society, thus vindicating its claim to a separate concept and term.

This brings us to the last and main point at issue: Is it true that the content of totemic phenomena centres, at least in a majority of cases, about certain attitudes towards nature? If so, must we accept the adhesion between totemic social structure (form) and a kind of supernaturalism (content) as a fact, pointing unmistakably towards a deeper connexion between the two phenomena? And, finally, must this adhesion remain unexplained, or does not an analytical examination reveal a certain fitness in the situation which could, at least, form the basis for a future more systematic interpretation? To forestall our conclusion, the fact itself of the adhesion is undeniable, and, in my opinion, a general theoretical explanation can account for its presence.

We may dispense with argument in proof of the assertion that certain attitudes towards nature stand, in the majority of totemic communities, in the very centre of the totemic content, for most of those familiar with totemic phenomena will not hesitate to endorse the assertion. The question remains: Is there any perceivable fitness in the fact as we know it? Can any reason be assigned for the undisputed tendency of certain attitudes towards animals, plants, and inanimate things to become associated with the type of social system which underlies totemic complexes?

The reason, in general terms, seems to be that the social situation in totemism creates certain demands and tendencies which have already been realized in the course of the association of man with nature; hence they are promptly seized upon and utilized for totemic purposes. To particularize:

In a community subdivided into social units, such as sibs, the first demand is for some kind of classifiers, preferably names, which would identify the separate units and yet signify their equivalence by belonging to one category. Again, hereditary kinship groups such as sibs, with their strong feeling of common interest and solidarity, tend, as socio-psychological experience shows, to project their community spirit into some concrete thing which henceforth stands for the unity of the group and readily acquires a certain halo of sanctity. It often happens

in connexion with such objects that certain rules of behaviour develop with reference to them, both positive and negative rules, prescriptions and restrictions. Such objects thus become symbols of the social values of the groups. Their very objectivity, as well as emotional significance, lends itself readily to artistic elaboration. All along, the classificatory aspect remains a fixed requirement, so that whatever traits may develop in the social crucible appear as homologous traits. Again, the members of individual sibs are tied by a sense of kinship. In the absence of precise degrees of relationship in the sib, as such, and prompted at times by a genealogizing tendency, this sense of kinship might take the form of a hypothetical descent from a common ancestor. Also, it would obviously fit the needs of the situation if the above objectivations of the social values consisted of things or creatures congenial to man, the properties of which were near and dear to him. Congenial to man, I say, but not identical with him, for human values, as such, are too jealously guarded to be convenient as classifiers. Again, it would seem eminently desirable that these creatures and objects should fall into classes, each representing a homogeneous group. This would ideally satisfy the requirement of figuring as symbols and objectivations of groups of persons who, within each group, profess intense feelings of solidarity and homogeneity.

Such, in rough outline, would be the tendencies of a community subdivided into sibs.

Now, if the persons who are the psychic foci of these tendencies had nothing in their experience or psychic content to draw upon to satisfy the demands of the situation, some new creations might be expected to appear which would to some extent fulfil this purpose.<sup>1</sup> But the last supposition is contrary to the fact. For there exists in all primitive communities a complex of experiences and attitudes far more universal and ancient than any clan system or totemic complex. This complex of experiences flows from man's contact with things and processes

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<sup>1</sup> It may not be amiss to note, in this connexion, how the above interpretation differs from that of Durkheim in his *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. From our standpoint, Durkheim's sociology is correct, his ethnology at fault. He analyses the social situation in a way not dissimilar to the above. Then he proceeds to derive the totemic complex directly from the tendencies flowing from the social situation.

Therein lies the difference of the two positions. It seems to me quite unjustifiable, because unnecessary, to assume that new, so-to-say duplicate values will be created in a social situation in the presence of pre-existing values which, as our analysis will show, fit the requirements of the case quite admirably. In justice to Durkheim, however, it must be said that he could not be expected to take this view, as his general position prevents him from deriving the psychic values here assumed as pre-existing from any other source than the very social situation in question.

in nature. Among these the experiences with and attitudes towards animals occupy the foremost place, followed by plants and inanimate objects. Things in nature have at all times exercised multitudinous functions in human society, and the attitudes they have aroused, whether matter-of-fact or mystical, range as far as does man himself. These things, animals in particular, are constantly used for naming individuals or groups, such as families, societies, clubs, game-teams, political parties, or, for that matter, houses and constellations. These things of nature are beautifully adjusted to the function of classifiers, as names or otherwise, for they comprise multitudes of objects or creatures belonging to several wide categories; they are familiar and congenial to man, yet lie outside the circle of specifically human things and activities, thus not being subject to the action of the disturbing agencies which abound in that realm.

Animals, again, as well as other things in nature, are early drawn into the domain of art, they are painted, tattooed, carved, woven, embroidered, dramatized in dances; they figure in realistic as well as in geometric representations, thus also rising into prominence as badges, signs, and symbols. Primitive man almost everywhere regards himself as somewhat akin to the animal, and mythologies abound in animals once human, and men once animals. Often descent is traced from animals. It would be hard to find a tribe lacking prescriptive or proscriptive rules referring to animals, plants, or other things. Religious attitudes towards things in nature are as universal as religion itself. To the eyes of men, moreover, organized into disparate, homologous, and internally homogeneous units, the realm of animals and that of plants and objects must present a spectacle of strange congeniality. For in these realms, as in his own social system, man discerns or senses things and creatures belonging to one general kind and several particular kinds, segregated into groups internally homogeneous.

Now, it must be remembered that all these experiences, relations, and attitudes belong to the range of the common human: they are found in all primitive communities and range far up into history.<sup>1</sup> Hence a community organized into definite hereditary social units, such as sibs, finds itself already in possession of most or all of these

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<sup>1</sup> This point deserves special emphasis. Totemic complexes or even sib systems do not belong to the true beginnings of social life. Not so with the supernaturalism or nature mysticism discussed in these pages. The minimum requirement here is the human mind equipped with the merest rudiments of culture, and nature. Nature mysticism as here described descends to the beginning.



experiences and attitudes. But we saw how in such a community certain tendencies rooted in its socio-psychic make-up must be expected to arise. These tendencies point towards just such relations, attitudes, and functions as are implied in the mysticism forced upon the mind of man by his experiences with nature. If these attitudes were not there, the social situation might have provoked them, or something like them. But they are there. Hence the demands of the social situation are readily satisfied out of the rich store of this pre-existing psychic material. The precise how and when of the process is another story, nor does it particularly matter. The crucial and significant point is this: a group divided into hereditary social units spontaneously develops tendencies the limiting value of which is a totemic complex. For the realization of these tendencies certain psychic or cultural attitudes are required. These are found available. In a situation which, were they absent, might have itself created them, they are utilized promptly and effectively.

It will thus be seen that there exists an inherent and deep-rooted *fitness* between nature mysticism and the social system which absorbs it. It is, then, to be expected that the vast majority of groups divided into hereditary social units will absorb this pre-existing mysticism or supernaturalism. The result is a totemic complex.

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## IV

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### A Final Note on Totemism



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### A Final Note on Totemism

IT HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR THAT NEITHER NATURE MYSTICISM nor the functioning in the form of a set of homologous units are inherently totemic traits. Both of these features occur elsewhere, outside of totemism. What opens up possibilities for a totemic complex is the association of these features with a sib system. To provide a socio-psychological background for this association, so that it no longer appears as wholly adventitious, was the aim of the preceding section.

A similar problem arises in connexion with the relation of totemism to exogamy. Practically all writers on totemism now agree that exogamy and totemism are not organically connected. No reason can be shown why the two institutions should be assumed as linked in their very origin, nor can either be deduced from the other directly, except by way of an exercise in pure speculation. It is admitted, on the other hand, that sibs, when compared with other social groupings, appear as the exogamous units *par excellence*. That this should be so seems plausible. Granted a tendency towards exogamy (negative exogamy, I mean: no marriage within a certain group), it would function most smoothly and effectively in the setting of a sib complex, where the individual social units, differentiated by names and perpetuated by social heredity, are also characterized by an intimate sense of relationship within each sib. Together with the homologous functioning of social units, exogamy then appears as a trait of the social system into which nature mysticism is drawn, in some such way as I have described. Thus the stage is set for totemism, subject, of course, to the checking or furthering impacts of historical accidents.

To restate the theory in a somewhat different form: The three most stable characteristics of totemism are: homologous social units, exogamy (of these units), and a peculiar nature mysticism or supernaturalism which constitutes the concrete content of the homologous functions. These three traits are not in themselves organic or ex-

clusive characteristics of totemism. They occur in other contexts. Sets of families, local groups, or religious societies also, as a rule, function as homologous units. Exogamy attaches itself to relationship groups, amorphous as units, to families, villages, dual divisions. Nature mysticism, finally, is a universal characteristic of primitive society. It flourishes in and out of totemism. Even in tribes comprised in a totemic complex, only some of the mystical attitudes towards nature form part of the totemic system.

What, then, brings these features together? My answer is: a sib system. It was shown that sibs are ideal carriers of exogamy and of homologous functions. Also that sib systems, without in themselves engendering supernaturalism, create a socio-psychological atmosphere pointing in some such direction. Certain demands are initiated which are satisfied by a nature mysticism functioning as the concrete dynamic content of the social system. Sib systems may thus be described as the socio-psychological home of totemic complexes. This does not mean, of course, that sib systems must be or always are totemic; or that totemism is impossible or, at least, unknown outside of a sib system. Such neatness of correspondence between the fit and the actual is not to be expected in history. We know of sib systems unadorned by totemism, and of totemic complexes resting upon families or local groups. But *totemism flourishes only when carried by a sib system; and sib systems, on the other hand, are so frequently totemic as to invite the application of Tylor's fruitful concept — adhesion.* Sib systems must have and, as I have attempted to show, do have a predilection for this nature mysticism.

This conclusion once reached, it becomes clear why this theoretical approach should be designated as historical by contrast with the purely analytical approach of my *Totemism, an Analytical Study*. When approached analytically, totemism, which in its elements presents nothing unique or specific, tends to disappear, partly or wholly. As a result, the concept "totemism" loses its univocal character, and the very term seems to become futile. In view of the mass of descriptive facts, so well known to students, this outlook seems eminently foolish. The historical perspective saves us from the queer predicament. Without endorsing any evolutionist excesses, we know that sib systems constitute an important phase in the history of primitive institutions. It is to this phase of society or of culture that totemism attaches itself as a congenial and therefore regular, though not invariable, companion.

*PART FOUR*

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RELIGION



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# I

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## Religion and Society

A Critique of Émile Durkheim's Theory of the  
Origin and Nature of Religion





## Religion and Society

### A Critique of Émile Durkheim's Theory of the Origin and Nature of Religion

FEW TOPICS HAVE OCCUPIED THE MINDS OF THINKING MEN WITH such persistence as has the problem of the origin and nature of religion. The psychologist vies with the sociologist and the anthropologist, the philosopher with the philologist and the theologian, in their attempts to illumine this phase of mind and culture which in its distribution is at least coextensive with man and, as an emotional value, possesses few rivals in the entire gamut of psychic experience. Of the many theories on record three deserve our attention here: naturalism, animism, animatism. According to the naturalistic theory, proclaimed by Max Müller, Kuhn, and others, nature itself is responsible for the religious sentiment. The powers of nature, so often mysterious, inexplicable, gruesome, strange, frightful, arouse in man an emotional response constituting the core of religion. The animistic theory of Tylor and Spencer, is of interest in two respects. On the one hand, it contains the doctrine of spirits; on the other (in Spencer), a theory of worship. While agreeing with Tylor in the essentials of the animistic doctrine, Spencer derives all forms of worship from the cult of ancestors. The animatistic theory, finally, finds its most enthusiastic representative in R. R. Marett. By the adherents of this doctrine, the most recent and popular of the three, animism is regarded as a mere incident in the development of religion; the fundamental religious concept becomes *mana*, supernatural power, impersonal magic potency, to which, on the subjective side, corresponds the religious thrill.

Of these theories, only the animatistic one makes any attempt to analyse the religious consciousness, to interpret its nature psychologically. In the vision of the animist and the naturalist, the savage is very much alone with his religion; the social milieu is left out

altogether; the process, moreover, through which religion comes to be is conceived of as a conscious rational act, a problem, posited and solved. In animatism the emphasis is shifted to the emotional side; we also hear now that religion is "congregational" and must be treated sociologically. The derivation of the *mana* concept, however, remains a purely individual affair; other individuals are understood to be there, but so far as the origin of *mana* is concerned, their part is that of a stage-setting.

An attempt to furnish a socio-psychological interpretation of religion, an attempt much more elaborate and pretentious than any of the above, has been made by Émile Durkheim, the French sociologist, in his *La Vie religieuse*.<sup>1</sup> The author aims to present a psychological analysis of the religious consciousness as well as an example of the most primitive religious complex. As the subtitle of the work indicates, the scene is laid in Australia, a field eminently within the competence of the author whose Australian researches have extended over a quarter of a century. Durkheim's argument is, in brief, as follows.

All attempts to account for religion by drawing upon the properties of nature are doomed to failure. The savage knows no natural, hence he can have no conception of the supernatural. Nature, moreover, is utterly devoid of those characteristics which, in and by themselves, could arouse religious emotions. We must note, in addition, that the most insignificant objects or creatures often figure as recipients of religious regard. Religious values, then, are not derived from nature but are superadded upon it. The derivation of fundamental religious conceptions from dreams and similar experiences is also at fault. Religion, with its universal appeal, cannot, in the last analysis, be due to an illusion; at the root of it must lie some concrete reality attested to in human experience.

Before proceeding with any analysis of religion we must realize that a definition of religion may not be restricted to its emotional content, but must be extended so as to include the conceptual side of religion, theology, and its activational side, ritual. There is no religion without a church. When analysed from this point of view, the fundamental fact in all religions seems to be a dichotomy of experience into sacred and profane. Acts, things, beings, which are holy, sacred,

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<sup>1</sup> Émile Durkheim: *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: Le Système totémique en Australie* (Paris, 1912). English translation by J. Swain: *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (Macmillan, 1915).

are juxtaposed to others that are commonplace, trite, profane. The quest for the origin of religion thus resolves itself into a search for that reality which underlies the dichotomy of experience into sacred and profane.

To find the fundamental core of religion we must turn to a religious complex demonstrably primitive. Such a complex is represented by Australian totemism; for totemism is based on the clan organization, and the clan is the most primitive social unit. Australian totemism reveals all the traits which, in higher forms, reappear in the world's great religions: it has a social aspect in clan totemism, and an individual aspect in the belief in guardian spirits; it possesses a cosmogony; it involves prayer and sacrifice and a belief in the soul.

An analysis of the totemic complex reveals the fact that the life experience of the Australian appears to him as sacred or profane according to its inclusion in or exclusion from the totemic cycle of ideas, emotions, and activities. The totem is the criterion of sacredness. Further examination, moreover, shows that while the totemic emblems, the totems, the totemites, all participate in the sacred realm, the veneration of the clan-mates is not directed to any of these beings or things or symbols, as such, but to a sacred and mysterious substance, the "totemic principle," which pervades them all.

A comparison of the "totemic principle" with *mana*, variants of which concept occur among the South Sea islanders, American Indians, and elsewhere, discloses the identity of the two concepts. The "totemic principle" is *mana*, which, when dominated by a clan system, as in Australia, appears, as it were, in a pluralistic or distributive form; when, on the other hand, the tribe acquires precedence over the clan, as in North America, the *mana* concept, freed from the restraining influence of the social units, appears in its familiar form of an undifferentiated, impersonal, all-pervasive power. What will explain the "totemic principle," then, will explain *mana*, the sacred, religion.

The life of the Australian fluctuates between two radically distinct cycles of experience. On the one hand, he fulfils the round of his daily pursuits, indifferent, monotonous, drab; on the other, he participates, at certain regularly recurring periods, in the sacred ceremonial activities of the tribe or the totemic clan. At such periods the grey monotony of daily experience gives way to excitement, frenzy, the charm of taboo, the passionate whirl of sacred songs and dances. The individual is transformed. His thoughts, emotions, acts, altogether transcend their accustomed level. He feels himself acted upon,

carried away, by a power which is of himself, yet also external to him. This power, which can exalt as well as constrain, is revealed to the mind in a sense of the Sacred (with a capital S). Thus religion is born. The rest is infection through association, contact, deliberate transfer. Religion, then, the sacred, *mana*, the "totemic principle," are but so many symbols of Society itself (capital again), and the most primitive form of a society is the totemic clan.

Durkheim's argument embraces the following fundamental propositions: nature, as such, cannot inspire the religious emotion; religion cannot, in the last analysis, be based on an illusion but must be rooted in a concrete reality derived from experience; an adequate definition of religion must take cognizance of conceptual, emotional, and activational elements; the fundamental fact in all religions is a dichotomy of experience into sacred and profane; the most primitive religious complex is totemism; the "totemic principle," the source of sacredness in the totemic cycle, is identical with *mana*; *mana* is but a symbol for society, the "totemic principle," the clan.

We may now take up these propositions one by one and subject them to a brief critical analysis.

*Nature, as such, cannot inspire the religious emotion.* When dealing with the remote periods in which religion was born, one must of necessity have recourse to inference and analogy. In psychological questions of such generality, however, as man's susceptibility to the impressions derived from nature, argument by analogy may be accepted as a safe guide. Man, then, as we know him in modern, ancient, or primitive times, is strongly susceptible to the impressions produced on him by nature. These impressions evoke in him a sense at least faintly religious. Earthquakes and the eruptions of volcanoes; tempests, floods, and torrential rains; comets, and the aurora borealis; eclipses of the sun and the moon; falling stars; forest and prairie fires; extreme variations in weather and climate—these and many other manifestations of the powers of nature always did, and continue to, impress themselves on the mind of man, arousing in him that thrill or recoil which constitutes the emotional nucleus of all religion. And what is true of these experiences applies, with a difference of degree only, to those slighter shocks and thrills evoked in man by the contact with his superiors, physically or mentally, whether these be animals or other men. May we not, moreover, discern the "psychologist's fallacy" in Durkheim's assertion that primitive man, knowing no natural order, could have no concept of the supernatural? To

be sure, the cleavage between the two realms need not, in primitive minds, fall where we should have it; transformations of animals into men and vice versa may to the savage be natural everyday occurrences, while a visit to a chemical laboratory or even a stroll along Broadway would for him be replete with supernatural experience. The study of primitive custom, mythology, language, brings irrefutable evidence of the presence of the concepts "natural" and "supernatural" in the savage mind. For reasons perhaps largely gastric, savages are great dreamers. Yet they distinguish drab commonplace dreams, devoid of special significance, from other dreams that are pregnant with meaning, replete with mysterious potency.

*Religion cannot be based on an illusion, but must be rooted in a concrete reality derived from experience.* This view of Durkheim's might well be discarded as of secondary importance but for the significant use made of it in his work. What, may we ask, does the author call an "illusion"? Surely, in a study of religion, we need not be concerned with the objective reality behind the conceptual constructs of the religious consciousness! The religious experience *is* the reality which counts. Is it not so with the æsthetic experience, or the ethical experience as well? There are, of course, certain objective facts or relations underlying these experiences, but the subjective response does not in any real sense represent, or even mimic or symbolize, the objective facts or relations. What counts, in all these situations, is the reaction of the mind which has its intellectual as well as emotional components.<sup>1</sup> At best, moreover, it is the notion of spirit that is based on what Durkheim calls an illusion, not the emotional thrill or recoil attending the supernatural experience;<sup>2</sup> in the latter, however, our author does not believe, at least not as an ultimate fact.

*Religion must be defined as a complex of conceptual, emotional, and activational elements. There is no religion without a church.* If the above proposition is merely taken to signify that every religion, as an institution, embraces a theology, a faith, a ritual, little exception can be taken to the statement. Even when so interpreted, it is true only in a most general way — namely, as a limiting concept to which every religion, in its institutional aspect, tends to approximate. For are not

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<sup>1</sup> This aspect of religion is clearly brought out in Professor Shotwell's definition: "religion is a reaction of mankind to something which is apprehended but not comprehended" (*The Religious Revolution of Today*). The definition is, however, too wide, for it also covers the æsthetic experience. The difference between the two lies, it seems, in this: in the religious experience it is the *content* of the "something apprehended" that is reacted to, in the æsthetic, the *form*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. below, pp. 378 sqq.

the three aspects most unevenly represented in different religions? Thus Buddhism and Confucianism embody conceptual constructs with but little faith and practically no ritual, whereas the religion of the Todas stands for pure ritualism, with faith and theology attenuated to scarcely appreciable forms. The error involved in Durkheim's mode of approach is, however, a more serious one. The author defines and analyses institutional religion as if this conceptual-emotional-activational complex were a homogeneous phenomenon, culturally, historically, and psychologically, and as such could be studied, as it were, *in toto*, with the use of the same methodological tools. This is very far from being the fact. A religion, like every other institution, represents, historically and psychologically, a highly heterogeneous complex. In such a complex live emotional elements go hand in hand with "evaporated emotions" serving as a petrified fringe to the religious concept or act; subjective experiences are intermingled with purely objective features; dynamic creative ideas exist side by side with traditional rite and form. Now, the psychic and social mechanisms involved in the different aspects of institutional religion are as different as must be the methods by means of which they can be investigated. The dogmas are recorded in written or oral tradition, and to them the scholastic methods of the bookman may well be applied. The rites must be seen and studied on the spot or laboriously reconstructed from written or oral accounts of numerous witnesses. The subjective experiences, finally, are varied in the extreme, and at best only a representative set of them can be secured by intensive investigation, necessitating, on the part of the student, a rare intimacy with the individuals examined. In the domain of primitive religion, for instance, which for long has occupied the attention of scholars and field workers, only the last few years have brought glimpses into the psyche of the religious devotee; and what meagre results have been achieved were altogether due to personal intimacy and a painstaking linguistic method.<sup>1</sup>

So much for institutional religion. But within every culture religious experiences occur which are but weakly institutionalized, while some of these, although likewise provided with a traditional background, remain almost altogether unsupported by similar experiences of other individuals. Owing to Durkheim's formalistic approach, this vast sphere of religion remains altogether unexplored.

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting example of what can be achieved in this way will be found in Paul Radin's *Crashing Thunder*.

*The cardinal fact in all religions is the dichotomy of experience into sacred and profane.* A partial critique of this proposition is implied in what was just said. On the one hand, all acts, beings, objects, experiences, involved in a religion are sacred—for such is the nature of the religious. So far the statement is true—but tautological. When a religion, on the other hand, is analysed in its concrete cultural setting, one finds that the domain of the sacred does not represent a psychologically homogeneous phenomenon. In Australia, for instance, the sacredness of a magical act or magician is not that of the totem; nor the sacredness of menstrual taboos that of unclean animals, not eaten because possessed by evil spirits. Similarly in our own society, the sacredness of the national flag is not that of the law, nor the sacredness of the family name that of a college pin or banner, nor the sacredness of one's own church that of someone else's church. The sacred, then, is an aggregate as psychologically heterogeneous as is the profane. To characterize religion, therefore, by a dichotomy of experience into sacred and profane is to create an artificial situation by establishing a presumption in favour of an interpretation of the sacred through some one general principle, a pit-fall Durkheim has failed to evade.

*Totemism is the most primitive religious complex.* Durkheim's selection of Australian totemism as the most primitive form of religion and as a proper setting for the origin of the religious emotion is supported by two considerations. Totemism, argues the author, is based on the most primitive type of social unit, the clan; hence totemism itself must be primitive; totemism, moreover, though primitive, embraces all the characteristic traits of the higher religions; hence it is a genuine religion. Durkheim's argument bristles with fallacies. We may not have reached a final solution in our search for the origins of organized society, but that the clan may not be regarded as a truly primitive institution we are certain. In the most primitive tribes known, locality and family, not the clan, serve as a basis of organization. This apart, is it not *a priori* obvious that a clan system, or any other artificial system, cannot be regarded as a primitive institution. In truly primitive society we find what is to be expected, a natural grouping into families (biological) and local communities (territorial).<sup>1</sup> But were we to grant, for argument's sake, that the clan is primitive, the admission would not make totemism primitive; for, on

<sup>1</sup> See my "The Social Organization of the Indians of North America," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXVII (1914), pp. 422-35.



the one hand, totemism might become associated with none but relatively evolved clan systems (of this there is, in fact, plentiful evidence); and, on the other hand, the primitiveness of clans would not argue for the primitiveness of a form of religion associated with them; just as we find complex social organization coupled with primitive material arts, as in Australia, or primitive social organization with advanced arts, as among the Eskimos. Durkheim's identification of totemism with most primitive religion, moreover, implies an unexpressed belief in the universality of totemism, a thoroughly exploded doctrine, for there is not a shred of evidence that such tribes as, say, the Eskimos, or Thompson, or Blackfoot, or Shoshone, ever were totemic.

Again, Durkheim's interpretation of totemism as a genuine religion must be regarded as one of the fatal consequences of his definition of religion. Most of the aspects of totemism carefully passed in review by the author can be shown, or at least suspected, to be of non-totemic origin. So-called "individual totemism" may not be regarded as a derivative of clan totemism. The guardian-spirit belief is most widespread among the Indians of North America, and nowhere does it flourish with greater exuberance than among the tribes of the so-called Plateau Area, tribes that know no totemism and, the chances are, never knew it. It might seem, at first sight, that what Durkheim calls the totemic cosmogony is a true offspring of totemism. But when one considers that the cosmological projection of social organization is a cultural feature of frequent occurrence, he might at least begin to suspect that totemic cosmogony may also have been social but not totemic in origin, the saturation with totemic values having taken place at a later period. A similar point may be raised with reference to the belief in souls which in Australia has a totemic colouring. But if various traits of totemism can be shown to be totemic by association, not origin, such traits may no longer be regarded as organic ingredients of a totemic religion.

What has been said in this section establishes a presumption against Durkheim's ultimate interpretation of religion, in so far as any "origin" of the religious emotion derived from a totemic context must needs fall short in point of universality and primitiveness.

*The "totemic principle" is identical with mana.* The "totemic principle" appears in Durkheim's argument somewhat after the fashion of a *deus ex machina* and seems to me to involve a marked rationalization of the Australian totemic situation. Possibly, however,

the author's notion of "totemic principle" does not really imply that character of abstractness which the text suggests. We may, therefore, accept the term as a conceptualized interpretation of the sacred totemic cycle of participation. But the author identifies the "totemic principle" with *mana*, representing it as a forerunner of the latter, the two concepts thus appearing identical in content but different in form. *Mana* is free, the "totemic principle" limited to the clan; *mana* is monistic, the "totemic principle" pluralistic.

At this point decided exception must be taken to the author's position. A full vindication of the *mana* concept need not be furnished here.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it to say that rapidly accumulating ethnological evidence brings abundant proof of the existence of a *mana* concept among primitive peoples. The claim of *mana* to greater universality and primitiveness than can be accorded the "totemic principle," may be gathered from the reflection that whereas the "totemic principle" is indissolubly bound to a definite form of social organization, itself of limited distribution, *mana* rests on nothing but nature and man's mind, in interaction. Whereas the "totemic principle" requires for its psychological derivation the highly specialized conditions of a totemic complex, the psychological derivation of the *mana* concept can be made from almost any conceivable religious situation. *Mana*, then, not the "totemic principle," can claim universality and primitiveness. If a similarity of content were conceded to the two concepts, a psychological derivation of *mana* would not improbably apply also to the "totemic principle"; but the reverse would not be true.<sup>2</sup>

*The "totemic principle" is a symbol of the clan; the reality underlying religion is Society.* This proposition represents the fundamental and ultimate aspect of Durkheim's theory. The thought is bold and original. No one before Durkheim, nor the author himself in his other works, has gone so far in effacing the individual in favour of the social. If the author's solution were found to be sound, a most significant step would have been made towards the illumination of two perennial problems, that of the relation of the individual to society, and that of the nature and origin of religion.

Three kinds of arguments may be advanced against Durkheim's position: an ethnological, a sociological, and a psychological one.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. below, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> The reader's attention is called to Paul Radin's violent attack on the *mana* concept in "Religions of the North American Indians," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, Vol. XXVII (1914), pp. 344-51.

In the first place, then, Durkheim's theory is by the very nature of his argument restricted to a totemic and ceremonial situation; it will, therefore, not hold for those tribes and areas which lack totemism as well as ceremonialism *en masse*. To make the point more specific: how does the case stand, for instance, in North America? The tribes of the Pacific North-West, of the South-West, part of the Plains tribes, those of the South-East, and the Iroquois, combine highly complex social systems with elaborate ceremonialism *en masse*. Most of these tribes are totemic. A large number of tribes, on the other hand, lack both of these features. To these belong the Eskimos of the arctic littoral, the tribes of the Plateau and of California, and many isolated groups throughout the North American area. Among these tribes we find neither complex social organization nor elaborate ceremonialism. Whence, then — if we follow Durkheim — their religions? Unless, indeed, they have borrowed all their religious conceptions — nay, the very emotions of the religious thrill — from tribes more fortunately situated! So far the ethnological argument.

In the second place, the conception of society or the social is, in Durkheim's theory, strangely narrow. Notwithstanding the tremendous importance ascribed to it, society in Durkheim's book is but a sublimated crowd, while the social setting is identified with a crowd-psychological situation. Society as a cultural, historical complex, society as the carrier of tradition, as the legislator or judge, as the standard of action, as public opinion, society in all of these varied and significant manifestations, which surely are of prime concern to the individual, does not figure in Durkheim's theory. All the marvels of social control are achieved through the medium of the crowd-psychological situation. Durkheim's theory, then, is a crowd-psychological one; but is his crowd-psychology sound? The author will have us believe that the religious thrill, the sense of the sacred, arises from the reaction of the individual consciousness to social pressure, or rather from a rationalization of that reaction. The social elements utilized in the author's theory are still to be found in society; hence his contention is subject to verification by our modern experience. Now, how does an individual react to social pressure which overwhelms him in a crowd-psychological situation, and what construction does he place on his reaction? The reaction is very much as Durkheim has described it: in the theatre, at a political meeting, in a mob, at a revival, in church, in a panic, the influence of the group on the individual is characteristic and decisive. But how does he rationalize

his participation in this group action or experience? Not by *contrasting* his daily life with the special crowd situation, nor by representing himself as actuated upon by a superior and external power. Quite on the contrary: the individual *identifies* himself with the group or crowd; he represents himself as sharing in the power which is of the crowd, of the group. *We* thought, *we* felt, *we* did, is for him descriptive also of his own part in the proceedings. Social settings of this variety constitute an experience so common in the life of man, primitive or modern, that the average person never thinks of contrasting these experiences with others or of regarding his crowd or group self as transcending the self of his daily routine. On the contrary, the crowd or group self is the self *par excellence*, as well as the self at its best. Again, it is not the crowd or group setting that lends the specific content to the individual minds. The joyful ecstasy of a jubilant crowd remains a feeling of joy; a panic is rooted in fear; the hatred of a lynching mob builds on individual hatreds; the adoration of a religious gathering is but a transformation of personal worship. In all of these instances, and innumerable others, the specific emotion experienced is not of crowd derivation. What is common in these situations is the crowd psychology: through a summation of stimuli and imitation, the emotions become intensified; the higher mental processes, involving deliberation and concentration, become paralysed; the instinctive and reflexive responses, on the contrary, which have through past ages become attuned to the particular emotion involved, rise into prominence. What results then is an intensified expression of a given emotion in terms of instinctive and reflexive reactions, reactions, that is, which belong to a relatively low level in human development. But the specific emotion so expressed is not born of the crowd and differs in different crowd-psychological situations. Thus a series of corroborees does not make an *intichiuma*, nor do the secular dances of the North American Indians become identified with their religious dances. A crowd-psychological situation may intensify or even transform a religious thrill, but it cannot create one. Thus the sociological argument is also opposed to Durkheim's theory.

In the third place, finally, we must take issue with the author on a psychological ground. The psychological argument has in part been forestalled in a preceding section. Does not the author's theory run counter to the verdict of experience in denying that natural phenomena can evoke the religious thrill? We know that under strictly analogous conditions man does experience the thrill. The author, moreover,

fails to do justice to the contribution of the individual to religious experience. It is true that the religious emotion, deeply rooted as it is in instinctive reactions reaching far back into human and possibly prehuman history, is to a marked degree amenable to the transformations conditioned by the crowd, the mob, and other more complex types of social setting. Religious experience, on the other hand, has also been enriched, elaborated, refined, by the spiritual contributions of individuals. These were either individuals of average religious potentialities but placed in unusual circumstances, or they belonged to that group of exceptional individuals who, at all times and places, have shown uncommon proclivities for the religious life. The first category is exemplified by the Indian youth who, at the dawn of maturity, retires to a shanty in the woods, fasts, purifies himself, until he is so pure that "the spirits can see through him"; then the vision of his life comes to him in the shape of a spirit-animal or object; he receives a supernatural revelation of certain powers which henceforth are his for life, and never after this may he kill or eat the earthly representatives of the animal which, in spirit form, thus came to visit him in his vision.<sup>1</sup> To the second category belong the exceptional men from whom history has recruited her religious teachers and reformers, fanatics and miracle-workers, revivalists, founders and destroyers of religions, prophets and saints. Now, what is emphatically characteristic of the second category of men (and women) is their tendency to shun the crowd, to flee from the world, to live in solitude. This tendency is not always equally pronounced, nor does it necessarily extend over the whole span of life. But by and large such persons are proof against religious settings except those of their own making; in their psychic constitution lie infinite potentialities of religious experience and ecstasy. Their god is within them. The lives of such as they constitute a glaring refutation of Durkheim's theory.<sup>2</sup>

My critique is drawing to a close. The arguments advanced seem to show that Durkheim's theory of religion does not bear out the

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<sup>1</sup> These guardian-spirit experiences do not, indeed, always take the particular form here described, but the instance may be regarded as fairly typical.

<sup>2</sup> It may be of interest to add here that Durkheim uses his sociologically derived religious concepts as stepping-stones towards a similar derivation of the fundamental categories of human thought. The theme is broached repeatedly in the author's study but nowhere is it treated with any degree of fullness. It is to be regretted that Durkheim did not live to pen the book he planned to devote to this topic. Cf., however, my remarks in a review of Durkheim's book in the *American Anthropologist*, 1915, pp. 731-3.

expectations aroused by the wisdom, scholarship, and noted brilliancy of the author. Durkheim errs in denying the savage the ability to differentiate between the natural and the supernatural, and in denying nature the power to evoke the religious thrill; he errs in accepting a mongrel definition of religion and in regarding the dichotomy of experience into sacred and profane as a psychologically univocal determination of all religion; he errs in identifying primitive religion with totemism, and the "totemic principle" with *mana*; he errs, finally, in claiming for *mana* and its emotional concomitant, the religious thrill, an exclusively crowd-psychological origin.

Thus Durkheim fails to furnish a satisfactory solution of either of the two problems which stand in the centre of his interest: the relation of individual to social experience, and the interpretation of the nature and origin of the religious sentiment. Sharp as is the author's wit and brilliant as is his argumentation, one closes the book with the melancholy assurance that Durkheim has left these two perennial problems where he found them.



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## II

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Spirit, *Mana*, and the Religious Thrill





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## II

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### Spirit, *Mana*, and the Religious Thrill

NOT A SMALL PART OF THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH RELIGION fall to the share of anthropology. Among these the relations of *mana* to spirit, of magic to religion, and of *mana* and spirit to magic and religion, have furnished abundant data for research and theory.

Before discussing these three problems I want to say a few words in justification of the method to be pursued. The favourite quest of classical anthropologists, as we saw, concerned origins. Hypothesis was piled upon hypothesis to account for the origin of clans, exogamy, religion, totemism. Among these hypotheses some were plausible, others less so; but all had this in common: they were designed to give a monogenetic derivation of a cultural feature. The aim was to furnish, not a beginning, but *the* beginning — the first origin.

In the light of modern ethnological criticism the faith in monogenetic theories has been shaken to its very foundations. The conviction is growing, indeed, that even the simplest institutions must have had multifarious origins. As a corollary to this assurance the ethnologist is now inclined to hesitate before assigning a specific origin to any institution as found in a particular culture, unless historical evidence can be adduced to substantiate the contention. It is also being recognized, although not as widely, that so many origins may give rise to an institution that each particular origin must be regarded as accidental — that is, as determined by a fortuitous combination of causes out of a larger number of possible causes.

In the light of these considerations it appears that the search for origins is not merely difficult but vain. They are but loosely articulated with the processes and mechanisms of culture. Their main charm lies in our not knowing them. As in gossip, it is uncertainty that whets the appetite of the searcher for "particulars." If all the origins of human institutions were suddenly revealed, the multi-coloured panorama would leave us none the wiser, or almost so.

It should occasion no surprise, then, if we find some critical ethnologists turning their backs upon origins altogether and preferring to devote their entire attention to the description and analysis of cultural processes and mechanisms as presented by the available data of ethnology.

As against the thinkers of the above type, I contend that the discarding of origins as monogenetic explanations need not lead to a general skepticism towards hypothetical reconstructions of all types. Many cultural situations could, in my opinion, be clarified if set against a background of genetic reconstruction. Such reconstruction, while necessarily hypothetical, should be expressed not in specific but in general terms.<sup>1</sup>

To turn, then, first to the problem of spirit. Ever since E. B. Tylor in his *Primitive Culture* announced his minimum definition of religion as "the belief in spiritual beings," if not indeed before that time, students became aware of the universality and unquestioned primitiveness of the animistic faith. Tylor's definition is vindicated by ethnological experience, for both religion and a belief in spirits were discovered even among the most backward tribes, whenever proper search was made. From a theoretical standpoint, however, Tylor's definition is somewhat misleading. The belief in spirits may be an all but universal constituent of religion; but it is not, in and by itself, a religion, but a *Weltanschauung*, a world view. The specific channels through which particular groups of men have arrived at the animistic interpretation of nature were no doubt many and varied, but a most general rationale of the process may perhaps be given in the following formula: *Whereas the generalized experience of the behaviour of things compatible with gross and permanent materiality becomes crystallized in the consciousness of man as the world of matter, the generalized experience of the behaviour of things incompatible with gross and permanent materiality finds conceptual expression in the world of spirit.* What particular experiences have led to such dual conceptualization is as readily conceivable as it is unessential.<sup>2</sup>

While the notion of spirit does not in itself involve a religious element, spirit and religious emotion are undeniably associated in all

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, pp. 337 sqq. and pp. 348 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> For particulars see Spencer and Tylor. One further point must be noted in justification of the above formula: the material as well as the spiritual worlds are conceived by primitive man as material. He knows no disembodied spirit. The distinction between matter and spirit is one of degree only: both are material, but the materiality of spirit is less gross and permanent; it is, in Tylor's terminology, tenuous or elusive.

religions, from the most advanced to the most primitive; not, indeed, in the sense that religious emotion always brings with it the spirit — for this is the reverse of the fact — but in the sense that spirits, as actually found in the beliefs of modern and ancient peoples, are inextricably associated with religion. There can be no doubt, therefore, that this association must have occurred in most primitive conditions. The generalized explanation of the process may be expressed in the following formula: *The same peculiarities in the behaviour of things which are responsible for the conceptualization of a world of spirit are also responsible for the early association of the world of spirit with the religious thrill.*<sup>1</sup> Those who have surveyed in thought the types of behaviour of things which must have engendered the notion of spirit will readily admit the psychological plausibility of the above formula.

The notion of the religious thrill brings us to the threshold of *mana*.

The term, now well known, was first introduced to ethnologists by Codrington, who found it widely used in Melanesia as a general designation for impersonal magic power or potency. Similar concepts were described among the Sioux Indians of North America, among the Algonkin, Iroquois, and other American tribes. In his account of Loango fetishism, Pechuel-Loesche, repudiating the older conception of a fetish as an artificial object possessed by a spirit, substitutes the interpretation of a fetish as an artificial object possessed of magic power the specific character of which is intimately connected with the form and composition of the object. Since then, similar concepts have been reported among other primitive tribes. It must, however, be added that other students developed resistance against accepting *mana*, on account of the difficulty they had experienced in forming a precise idea of the concept on the basis of the published accounts.<sup>2</sup> This skeptical attitude seems, however, altogether unwarranted. The independent recording of the concept by many trained observers, its vindication in the light of linguistic and psychological data, make the reality

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<sup>1</sup> The term "religious thrill" has often been objected to on the ground of its popular-psychological flavour. The objection carries but little weight if the term can be shown to have an appreciable meaning and to be readily understood. Such, in my opinion, is the case. The term "thrill" denotes a heightened emotional tone, and the high serviceability of the term is based on the fact that it denotes nothing else, so that the terms "religious" or "æsthetic" or "sexual," when combined with it, convey the idea of the more precise content of the thrill. When a certain minimum level of definiteness of content is reached, we distinguish the thrill as sexual, religious, or æsthetic.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dr. Paul Radin's interesting remarks in his "The Religion of the North American Indians," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 1914, pp. 335-74.

of *mana* a certainty. The vagueness and elusiveness of the concept, on the other hand, need not occasion any surprise. These traits lie in the very nature of *mana*. Impersonal or personal, detached or acting through something else, all-pervasive in essence, but at times strictly localized, *mana* must of necessity elude precise definition, nor is it easily stamped by a word or term.<sup>1</sup>

It seems fairly certain that the notion of *mana*, as entertained in most primitive times, must be directly correlated with the religious thrill. The psychological derivation of *mana* may be expressed in the following formula: *The generalized experience of the behaviour of things associated with the religious thrill receives conceptual expression in mana.*<sup>2</sup> *Mana* then is the direct objectivation of the religious emotion, it is *that which causes the* (religious) *thrill*. We saw before that the religious emotion, and with it, we may now add, the *mana* concept, must have become associated with spirit from the earliest times. Now, while *mana* thus becomes in part absorbed by spirit, psychological plausibility again suggests that it does not become wholly so absorbed. While spirits are many and varied, in form as well as in function, they all have *mana*, they all arouse the religious thrill; but so also do other beings, things, events, not associated with spirits. Thus the common thrill-producing element in all religious situations, whether centring in a spiritual or a material thing, may be expected to preserve its separate conceptualization on a par with spirit and other carriers of the religious. This psychological deduction *a priori* seems, as shown above, well supported by recorded fact. Thus spirit and *mana* must be regarded as the fundamental concepts of all religion. Born in the thrill-ridden atmosphere of earliest society, they persist in modern religions. When one deals with primordial matters, chronologizing is difficult; but if a decision were called for, *mana*, as a more simple and general concept, would perhaps deserve priority when compared with spirit. And indications are at hand that *mana*, while perhaps more primitive than spirit, will also outlive its perennial companion. Whereas spirit is rapidly giving way before the disillusioned

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<sup>1</sup> The use of the term "*mana*" as a general expression for impersonal magic power requires a further word of explanation. While the existence of the *mana*, *wakan*, *orenda*, and other such concepts, may be regarded as proved, it does not by any means follow that all such concepts, as actually entertained by various peoples, carry exactly the same connotations. The reverse, in fact, is probable. But the wide distribution of such concepts suggests the prevalence in primitive times of a similar notion, a sort of proto-*mana*, containing the common core of them all. To that pristine notion the term *mana* may justifiably be applied.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Robots or Gods*, Chapter v, where the process of projection, here taken for granted, is dealt with more fully.

gaze of the sophisticated mind, *mana* may continue to live as long as the conceptual power of man reacts to the religious thrill.

Our other problem is the relation of magic to religion. This also has been variously conceived. By some both magic and religion are regarded as primitive and universal; others look upon magic as the more primitive belief, superseded at a relatively late stage by religion. Magic is represented as individual, religion as social; magic as a secret set of rites outside the law, religion as the recognized creed sanctioned by public opinion. Magic, finally, is conceived of as mechanical, as a sort of primitive science, involving a belief in natural order and uniformity; religion as postulating human impotence, as involving an emotional attitude towards superior divine powers.<sup>1</sup>

After setting aside purely terminological issues, it can be shown that each and all of these contrasts or distinctions break down upon analysis. While magic certainly belongs to the earliest institutions of mankind, religion also is at least coextensive with culture, provided, of course, the issue is not shirked by the introduction of a definition patterned upon the "higher" religions. In the later stages of its development magic assumes the character of a black art practised by a few and feared by the rest. Such is not the nature of primitive magic. The Australian or American medicine-man, the Siberian shaman, are socially recognized figures who differ from the average tribesman only to the extent of being more intense or intelligent or skilful. The faith they profess is the faith of the group; and their art is in some measure shared by all, or almost so. We also know of numerous instances of group magic, such as the magical ceremonies of the Malay, the Australian *intichiuma*, or the hunting-magic of the north-west of America. Magic, then, no less than religion, is social.

Nor is the participation of spirits a safe test of the magical or religious character of a proceeding. The Arunta magician achieves by pointing a bone precisely what the Siberian shaman successfully accomplishes with the assistance of a spirit helper. The conception of magic as primitive science, finally, is but another illustration of "the psychologist's fallacy." The savage does not think of uniformity, he posits no natural law in justification of his magical practice. At the root of the magical situation lies the belief in power; and what the power achieves once, it will achieve again — a belief far more basic and primitive than the concept of natural law.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, pp. 167 sqq.

The only distinction that can be made between magic and religion, without imposition on the facts, is by the use of limiting concepts. Religion, as an individual phenomenon, tends to develop along the line of subjective elaboration. In the highest stages of religious development this results in a psychic content the justification of which rests in the fact of its own existence. Magic, on the other hand, develops into a pure esoteric technique, a way of achieving external results by means of certain definite devices or techniques, behaviouristic or verbal. In primitive conditions magic and religion are inextricably intertwined, but any particular situation may be classed as religious, magical, or both, according to its approximation to one of these two types. To this it must be added that religion, as we know, is also commonly accompanied by rites, utilitarian or other; but such rites, unless indeed combined with a magical component, do not comprise the element of constraint. Instead, we here discover an element of supplication, a reliance on the will, not of the supplicants or performers, but of a higher power.

The fundamental concept of magic and religion is supernatural power, *mana*; while the basic emotion underlying religion, as well as magic, is the religious thrill. The spirit, as already noted, is most intimately associated with religion; while it also favours the company of magic, their intimacy is less pronounced.

Now, while it is true that magic rites, as commonly encountered, are accompanied by a religious thrill, it does not therefrom follow that magic as a constraining technique was born within the religious realm. From this point of view the relation of magical acts to the religious thrill is analogous to the relation of spirits to the religious thrill. I have argued that the constant association of animism with religion did not militate against an extra-religious derivation of the concept of spirit. Similarly, an extra-religious derivation of the magical act is not negated by the constant association of the two in experience. The magical act, in its origin, does not seem to require a religious setting as an explanatory factor.

A magical act may be analysed psychologically as *an expression in behaviour of a mental content the core of which is a desire*. There is nothing religious in such an act. If, therefore, magical acts are found to be accompanied by a religious thrill, this must be ascribed, not to community in origin, but to subsequent association. This may be explained in the following way. Desires, in order to lead to expression in behaviour — representative or symbolic of the object desired —

must reach a certain degree of intensity. Hence such behaviour remains fixed in memory. But the objects of desire are things that are actually available, events that actually occur, sooner or later. When, subsequent to the magical act, the things present themselves, the events occur, they are brought into causal connexion with the magical act, still fresh in memory and coloured by emotional overtones. At the same time there arises a half-realized intuitive comprehension that the objects of desire are in magical situations secured in ways different from those with which the primitive man is familiar in his matter-of-fact dealings with nature. The magical way is different in two respects. On the one hand, it is coloured by strong emotion; in other words, the magical act occurs in an atmosphere of psychic tension which sets it off from the relatively indifferent emotional level of matter-of-fact achievement. On the other hand, the results of a magical act, while firmly anticipated and in so far psychologically comparable to the results of technical or matter-of-fact procedure, also differ from the latter in two ways: in precise content and time of occurrence the results of a magical act are not definitely foreseeable. There is in the magical process in its entirety, including, that is, the magical act as well as the final result, what Durkheim would call a breach of continuity; and there is in the period separating effort from achievement — a period without analogue in matter-of-fact activity — something that fills the mind with suspense, anticipation, and — sometimes, perhaps — doubt. Thus the stage is set for the religious thrill, and for *mana*.<sup>1</sup>

Thus magic and religion, having met in remotest antiquity, do not part again until much later in the history of culture, when religion, while still partly teleological, begins to attain its ends by other means, then ceases to be teleological altogether; whereas magic, divesting itself completely of the religious thrill, becomes exclusively and dryly teleological.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., in this connexion, the first two chapters of my *Robots or Gods*.

<sup>2</sup> It may be worth noting that attitudes having a magical flavour reappear in intensely religious as well as modern situations. The Christian belief in the constraining effect of fervent prayer must be characterized as a recrudescence of magical faith. Magical survivals, again, in the form of beliefs in influences other than those known to natural science are common in our culture. Such are the beliefs in psychic action at a distance, in the prenatal influences exercised by a mother's experiences on the child in her womb, in lucky and unlucky days, numbers, stones, and accidents. Most of these beliefs, as held today, are thoroughly de-emotionalized or, at most, but thinly padded with emotion. In days gone by, such and similar situations were replete with *mana*, alive with the religious thrill. Cf. my article "Magic" in the *International Encyclopædia* (second edition).



Thus the essential and ultimate factors in magic and religion are four in number: two factors are conceptual, spirit and *mana*; one emotional, the religious thrill; one activational, the magical act. Of these factors the emotional one, the religious thrill, is evoked directly by man's contact with certain manifestations of nature. The inclination to experience, on certain occasions, such a thrill must be regarded as one of the most deeply rooted and ancient traits of the psychic organization of man. The conceptual factors, spirit and *mana*, go back to generalizations of certain types of behaviour in things; but whereas *mana* represents a direct conceptualization of the religious thrill, spirit, as such, is not a carrier of religion, but becomes early associated with the religious thrill on account of certain peculiarities in the behaviour of spirits, in part at least of the same peculiarities which lead to the conception of spirit. The activational factor, finally, the magical act, is an expression in behaviour of certain desires. The magical act, as such, is not religious, but becomes early associated with the religious thrill on account of certain peculiarities in magical situations when compared to matter-of-fact situations.

*PART FIVE*



RACE



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# I

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## Race and Culture in the Modern World



## Race and Culture in the Modern World

(A Lecture)

**T**he Nature of the Race Complex. — IT SO HAPPENS THAT race is not merely a physical and psychological fact; today, as so often before, it has become a state of mind. Race is a state of mind. It is an attitude. We are replete with it.

The psychoanalyst would call it a complex. Now, you know what a psychoanalyst does with a complex of this sort. His way of curing it is to entice it out of the unconscious and throw the light of consciousness upon it. It is this — if we are to believe the psychoanalyst — that achieves the cure.

Now, as I see it, my function is to resolve the racial complex into what the anthropologist knows it to be by throwing the light of reason on this emotional — yes, largely emotional — complex, which at the present time once more occupies the stage. Of late it has acquired a powerful helpmate in reason itself, in the form of psychological tests and statistics, often employed as props to our prejudices.

I am not, however, speaking to you solely as an anthropologist, to whom man is no more than *anthropos*. To me men and women are strange creatures with a wonderful heritage of animal instincts, a streak of genius somewhere, and a great capacity for happiness and misery, such men and women as we all are. For the problem of race and culture refers to us all.

*Racial Origins.* — Well, we may not be so very wonderful, but after all, of all the tricks and twists of nature, man represents the trickiest of all. This, among other reasons, militates against the theory of a multiple origin of man on earth. A prominent anthropologist recently defended such a theory, claiming that man originated independently as many as eight times.<sup>1</sup>

Nature may be very ingenious, but there is such a thing as economy

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Dixon's *The Racial History of Man*.

of effort, and it was tricky enough, I repeat, to produce man once. To multiply origins here would be courting unnecessary difficulties.

At that remote time, then, all races must have been one. In some way or other—and we know hopelessly little about it—man became dispersed over the surface of the globe, so that, speaking roughly, Africa was now Negro, and Asia Mongolian, and Europe white (a sort of bleached-out Mongolian), and America Indian (another Mongolian offshoot). There were other less numerous variants. No doubt these differentiations took place under the influence of physical environment, but again we do not exactly know how.

One is prompted to assume glibly that the dark skin of the Negro is a sort of perpetual sunburn. The assumption, however, is unwarranted, for light-skinned types have lived in Africa for generations without changing their skin colour. There must be some other as yet unknown factor. One thing is certain, the influence of physical environment is involved somehow. Recent investigations have shown that physical environment is strangely potent in producing changes in racial types.<sup>1</sup> Let us not forget this! The idea of the permanence of racial types has ingrained itself very thoroughly in our consciousness. But now we are invited to believe that racial types are not by any means permanent, even in the absence of racial intermixture.

Well, now, what happened next? The races began to mix. You find that to Africa there came Mongolian peoples from Asia. This happened in ancient days in northern Africa, and it is happening again to-day in the south of Africa. Europe, with its white population, was swarmed again and again by Mongolian hordes. Again, the Arabs, before appearing in Europe, first passed over the northern boundary of Africa and there mixed with Negroes; so that by the time they reached Spain, they carried in them strains of Negro blood. By the time Charles Martel stopped their farther northward expansion at the battle of Tours and Poitiers, they had intermarried and otherwise mixed with Spaniards and with Jews in Spain. By the Spaniards and Spanish Jews the strain of Negro blood was carried to more northern countries. When white man came to America, there was further intermixture with a branch of the Mongolian stock, the American Indian, and then with the African Negro on American soil. The Negro has also mixed with the Indian.

Of all peoples—be it noted—the whites are most mixed. Most

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to Boas's *Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants* (Washington, 1910).

other racial strains are represented in the blood of white men and women. Pure race is a myth. This, however, does not mean that pure types never appear. The reason for the fact that they do lies in the following principle of heredity: Children do not represent what is called a "mid-parental type," resembling the father and the mother at the same time and tending to lie between the two. The tendency, rather, is to revert to one of the ancestral types represented by the father or the mother. Owing to the operation of this principle, we find that, notwithstanding perpetual mixture of racial types, relatively pure types and families of relatively pure type will at times appear. Their racial history may be mixed, but in their actual physical traits they may remain relatively pure when compared with the original types.

Descriptively speaking, then, or from the standpoint of appearance, "pure" physical types may still be encountered. From the standpoint of racial composition, on the other hand, or the history of race, all races are mixed. If the theory of race superiority is to find a firm foundation, it should rest on some postulate other than racial purity.

*Racial Psychology.* — We are, of course, not especially interested in the physical aspect. Of greater importance for our cultural problems are the psychological characteristics of race. Time does not permit me to deal with this subject at length, but probably most of you know what the results of scientific investigation are in this field. Anthropologists have, off and on, tried to subject so-called primitive peoples to psychological examinations. These were of the same general pattern as those used in our colleges or on the recruits of the army during the war. Until recently it was assumed, on the basis of such tests, that in the elementary sensory and psychic qualities, primitive man did not significantly differ from modern man. The higher mental qualities of association and abstraction could not be tested in this way.

Now, many of you or, at least, some of you must have read the accounts of the recent investigations conducted during the war on a large number of American soldiers coming from different localities.<sup>1</sup> Among them were many coloured people, and the results of the investigations seem to indicate a striking inferiority of the coloured folk. There is one diagram in the report which seems to indicate that the very best of the coloured privates performed just barely as well as the very worst of the white officers.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Psychological Examining in the United States Army," *National Academy of Science, Memoir XV* (1921).



This is not the time nor the place for a detailed analysis of the problem (some day I may do this in print). I do, however, want to express my view on the entire matter of psychological tests, and especially on the application of such tests to the measurement of racial quality.

If the Negro really were as inferior to white man as the tests seem to indicate, we could not live with him in this country. The Negro would be not much better than a monkey. If we could associate with him at all, we should have to use him as a pet. If the difference between Negro and white man, from the standpoint of psychological performance, were as great as this diagram seems to indicate, he would be barely human.

I am just throwing this out as a warning to you. The last word has not been said on the methods applied in psychological tests or on the interpretations put upon the results. Here, as in many similar cases, measurements which really represent nothing but a convenient device for grading individuals are accepted as a test of "intelligence." The psychological tests may measure many things, but they do not in any real sense measure intelligence.<sup>1</sup> So this is the long and short of it!

To repeat, then, I do not say that there are no psychological differences between the races (and please understand me with reference to this point); I do not say that the races are all psychologically identical. I think, in fact, that it would be strange if this proved to be so. We saw that from the physical standpoint the races became greatly differentiated after their dispersion over the surface of the globe, and that these differentiations, if not immutable, were deep-rooted. To assume that no psychological changes accompanied these physical changes would be, to say the least, unreasonable. I think, therefore, that we may safely assume that fuller knowledge and more critical methods may some day fill this gap.<sup>2</sup>

The specific racial differences often so glibly assumed, on the other hand, usually prove to be illusions when critically examined. When we talk about the taciturnity or self-control of the Mongolian, this feature, though actual, is not racial, but cultural, acquired, not by heredity, but in education. The Anglo-Saxon differs from the old-time Rus-

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Bohring once wrote that intelligence, to the testers, was "that which the tests test." If only others were as outspoken!

<sup>2</sup> It must, of course, be remembered that the races are becoming rapidly obliterated through interbreeding. It may thus occur that by the time we are ready with our tests, there will be no one left to be tested.

sian in a similar way, and the explanation of the difference is also the same. This applies to all so-called national traits. There is, to be sure, a national psychology, but it is rooted, not in biology, but in history.

Many of you must have read, during the last months, the articles in the *Nation*<sup>1</sup> about the different states of this Union. A very curious kaleidoscopic picture is produced in our minds by these sketches. One might almost imagine that every state in the Union has a civilization of its own. Now, what would you think of the person who would interpret these cultural localisms — national cultures on a small scale — in terms of inborn psycho-physical qualities? Here, then, where the thing is relatively recent, where it is happening before our very eyes, as it were, we, of course, interpret it as a cultural phenomenon, not as a biological one. The same must be said about those racial or national peculiarities which today are regarded as expressions of the psychic or psycho-physical characteristics of the races or peoples. One and all, they are likely to be resolvable into purely historical or cultural determinants.

*Psychology and Culture.* — Now let us pass to our next topic which will be the relation in the life-history of man of the physical and psychological racial facts to culture and the historical process. Here, once more, use is being made of the erroneous generalizations with reference to the so-called primitive peoples who have merely culture, whereas we pride ourselves upon culture plus, or civilization, and the like.

But let me draw your attention to the fact that high and low civilizations have been produced by other racial stocks than the white. Take, for example, the Mongolian. Among Mongolians we have the high civilizations of China and Japan, on the one hand, and the relatively primitive tribes of the Lower Amour River and of northern Japan (the Ainu), on the other. The same holds true of the American Indians. While no such striking contrasts are found here as in the Asiatic instances just noted, still the civilizations of the Peruvian Incas and the Mayas of Yucatan loom high above the general cultural level of other American tribes. So you can see that the white race does not stand alone in producing both low and high types of civilization.

It is true that in certain respects white man has, for one reason or another, outstripped other civilizations. In knowledge, for example,

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the articles "These United States" (1925) subsequently published in book form.

both theoretical and applied, we stand immeasurably above all other civilizations. Thence the conceit so often voiced that there is only one great and high civilization: namely, that of white man. *Men are many*, they say, *civilization is one*, meaning by this that the psycho-physical qualities of different groups of men are different, and that only one group, white man, has produced a true civilization. The conclusion of the anthropologist who is in a position to look at the problem more objectively and critically, points in the opposite direction. He says: *Man is one, civilizations are many*. This means that all the races of man, as far as their availability for cultural purposes is concerned, are on a par and comparable. Civilizations, on the other hand, are many, both in variety and in achievement, and more than one race has enjoyed the adventure of building a high civilization.

We might, then, join hands with Bertrand Russell, a man strangely free from the prejudices of his time and kind, and believe with him that valuable cultural results might be expected if we but saturated ourselves with the Chinese cultural ideals, their remarkable respect for learning and education, their appreciation of contemplative thought, their love of beauty. We may boast, with some justice, about our wonderful mechanisms for realizing the purposes of life, but we might well learn or relearn from the Chinese what these purposes ought to be, in a high-minded society.<sup>1</sup>

I do not want you to understand me to say that the potential psychic equality of the races is a demonstrated fact. All we can say is that, for all we know to the contrary, such equality may be a fact. It is, on the other hand, not impossible, even though far from demonstrable, that in the variable group: white man, certain conditions may favour the appearance of, say, one genius more per million than in other racial groups. This is admittedly pure speculation; but if granted, for argument's sake, such a condition would be sufficient to account for many a spurt in the historical performance of a race.

What is more important than this is the consideration that for the purposes of a common historical life — in democracy, idealism, co-operation — the great races of the world — the Mongolian and white Euramerican, the Hindoo, Arab, and Negro — have all the necessary qualifications. We might as well be prepared to share the world in the

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<sup>1</sup> With Russell's truly detached and imaginative attitude may be compared that of Professor John Dewey, as expressed in his articles on China. He also thinks well of the Chinese, but to him they never rise above the status of capable disciples who, if they learn well, might some day equal us in their cultural achievement.

future with the Mongolian, Negro, Arab, and Hindoo. These racial groups are too numerous, their cultural achievements or potentialities too solid and assured, to allow for any fear that they might suffer the fate of peoples with more primitive civilizations.

*The Fate of the Primitives* is a sad one. Let me remind you of it in a very few words. Everywhere it has happened: in Australia, where the Anglo-Saxon came in contact with the native blacks; in the two Americas, where Anglo-Saxon and Latin encountered the aboriginal Indians; in north-eastern Siberia, where the Russians invaded the territories of stray Mongolian and other native groups; in Melanesia also, and in Polynesia, where a strangely beautiful civilization had grown up amongst a race of semi-aquatic human beings.

In all these cases white contact proved the native's doom: the primitive population disintegrated; culture decayed and is now rapidly disappearing. In the tragic words of the late W. H. R. Rivers, one of England's greatest anthropologists, these natives are "dying from boredom." This, I think, is the fact. When these peoples come in contact with our civilization, they lose interest in their own ideas, ideals, and values. Neither are they permitted to identify themselves with our civilization. The result is devastating. Faith is shattered, character undermined; imported vice and disease do the rest. Native culture crumbles. The primitives disappear.

A tragic fact, indeed! And irretrievable. It is too late to do anything about it. All we can say is: let the dying die in peace. But there are others who do not intend to die, and they are our problem. These are the groups I mentioned a moment ago, the Hindoos, Mongolians, Arabs, and African Negroes — millions and millions of them. They will remain, and with them we must learn to share the earth.

What will be the probable future of these racial groups, and in what way can we affect the development of their civilizations? Well, to put it in a very few words, I should say that there can be no doubt that the Mongolian, Arab, Hindoo, and Negro will develop, at least in part, after the pattern of white man's civilization, and yet I feel that it is to be both hoped and expected that they will preserve some cultural autonomy, will save some of the treasures of their own historical past. If, on the contrary, the development of these great racial groups should take place under the constant economic, imperial, and military pressure of the white nations, then calamity is certain to follow, and the group that will suffer most might well prove to be that of the oppressor.

*Visions of Armageddon.* — With your permission, I want to tell you from personal experience how the future relations of the races are envisaged by some persons. This particular vision, as I might call it, was related to me independently by three men. In all three cases the substance was essentially the same, although one of my friends was an old Russian revolutionist, the second a radical Japanese student of political science, and the third a Hindoo nationalist, obviously an aristocrat, and a prominent figure in the educational life of India.

The vision was this: The civilization of white man is today dominated by Anglo-Saxon ideals and by the English-speaking nations, England and America. Anglo-Saxon civilization is rotten at the base. This renders the situation pretty hopeless. For unless these nations mend their ways, they will drive the world into another war, a war more destructive and terrible than the World War.

How will the sides be divided in this war? In Asia the bulk of the human material will be provided by China. China will be drilled by Japan. The peoples of India will also join this group. The peoples of Asia in arms, led by Japan, will be faced in Europe and America by England, the United States (they were not sure about Australia and Canada), and France. Germany, on the other hand, and Russia will in the beginning of the struggle occupy the position occupied by the United States in the beginning of the World War. They will profess neutrality while secretly sympathizing with the Asiatic powers, and ultimately they will join on the side of Asia.

The three men who drew this picture for me were not quite sure of what will happen with the African Negro, but they assumed that the American Negro will go with America. They added that, if France continued its present policy of utilizing the African Negro for purposes of imperialistic self-aggrandizement, the Negro would know on which side to join. And they all felt that the outcome of such a world struggle could only be one: the destruction or, at best, the enslavement of the white race and the decay of white civilization or its absorption by the civilizations of Asia.

Now, I personally would not consider the latter eventuality as necessarily a calamity. Perhaps the world has seen enough of white man's ideals, and a Mongolian civilization might make a very nice change. But in its entirety the picture, you will agree, is not an attractive one.

It need not for the moment concern us whether this sort of thing is at all probable. What is of interest is that we are here confronted with a state of mind shared by a Russian revolutionist, a Japanese

student, and a Hindoo nationalist, and that all three conceive of the future relations of the peoples of Asia, Europe, and America as culminating in a fatal struggle, leading to the destruction or subjection of the white race.

Wherein lies the root of this idea? It is, I believe, nothing but a projection into the future of their conviction that white man is incurably selfish in his dealings with other races, and that if he is to be taught a lesson, this cannot be done on a moral or intellectual plane, but must be fought out on the battlefield, where, by his own choosing, white man has so often established his supremacy over the other races.

So this is the vision. . . . And the moral is obvious enough!

*Race and Culture in America.* — Last of all, I should like to consider the racial and cultural problem as it concerns the United States of America. We have a number of problems here which are of continental magnitude: the problem of the Negroes, the Japanese, the Jews — I regret to have to say that the Jew has become a problem here in America — and then we must also face the tremendously complex situation consequent upon the arrival on these shores of diverse groups of immigrants other than the Jew and the Japanese.

The prevailing attitude taken today towards immigration would have seemed strange indeed but a few years ago. Such books as those by Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard — all of you have read the books — take it for granted that the average man or woman considers the immigration to the United States of various European groups as little short of a national calamity. This applies to all groups but one — namely, the representatives of the Nordic race, which alone is alleged to possess the qualities of mind and character acceptable to the people of this commonwealth. A strange idea, this! Ten or fifteen years ago it would have been laughed out of this country, and perhaps ten years hence (dare I hope?)<sup>1</sup> the older and saner attitude will return. But today the anti-racial complex is with us, and it is "going strong."

Is there anything that can be done about the situation? The outlook, I confess, is not hopeful. For, as you know, we are not dealing here with rational processes, but with emotional backgrounds, traditions, the urge of self-interest, the forces of group psychology. All of these are elements not readily amenable to the influences of reason or argument.

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<sup>1</sup> Now that the time is up, I no longer entertain such illusions. *A. G.*

The first and perhaps the major problem of America is that of the Negro. There are more than ten million coloured people among us. This is a tremendous proportion. And yet many Americans have felt and continue to feel that the Negro problem is not a problem, that it will not have to be solved because it will solve itself.

Well, the problem does not seem to be solving itself, and to the extent to which we realize this it is becoming more and more of a problem. Can anything be done here by deliberate effort? I do not know. I do not know of any method by means of which it would be possible to make people change their attitude towards the Negro.

We find, on the one hand, that the traits ascribed to the Negro are not always taken seriously even by those who are most vociferous in proclaiming them. Take, for example, the South. We know that the Negro is not treated fairly there, but there is also another side to the picture. It is just in the South that the white folk are very fond of the Negro. It is just in the South, for example, that children were educated, for generations, by Negro maids and mammies. Now, would these Southerners commit their children to the care of these people if they, in all earnestness, deemed them inferior? We recognize the earmarks of a "complex" with a rationalization at the top and a deep-rooted tradition-fed prejudice, at the bottom.

You may characterize the Negro by his shiftlessness and laziness, his emotionalism and unreliability, his inability to persist in work. But suppose you ask any housewife who keeps a maid, Irish, Scandinavian, or German (she is not likely to have an Anglo-Saxon one), suppose you ask her what she thinks of her maid, and as likely as not she will characterize her behaviour in terms of the very traits usually ascribed to the Negro. These traits are not peculiar to the Negro by any means, they are common human characteristics which we like to emphasize when we deal with people against whom we harbour a prejudice. Being prejudiced, we ascribe to these people inherent psychological inferiorities; otherwise it would be difficult to treat them as badly as we do. This is the way the thing works! But to assume that the Negro alone displays these traits would be both unfair and absurd.

I could take you to Africa where the Negro is at home. There you would behold his manifold industries, his tireless activities, his inventiveness — to be sure, his culture is not ours, but his own — and you would presently realize that the traits some of us consider white man's prerogatives are not foreign to the Negro in his own country, where he is interested in his work, enthusiastic about achievement, certain of

his values. On the cotton plantation, of course, the Negro is lazy and shiftless, as most of us would be, in his place.

But perhaps this standpoint is too theoretical. You may want to hear about the practical aspect of the subject. What can we do with the Negro here in the States? If our attitude is rooted in prejudice, can we get rid of it? I do not know. Frankly, I do not know. In my experience no method has as yet been devised by means of which we could change attitudes of this sort. They come and go; mostly they come, and we do not know how to get rid of them.

One way, of course, is education. But try to educate the American people towards an attitude favourable to the Negro! Who will do the educating? This is the tragedy of the educational problem. We have to begin at the end. We do not know on whom to rely when we want our children taught that the Negro is not inferior.

Here we might digress for a moment to illustrate in another instance the insidiousness of race prejudice. I refer to the Jews in Palestine. Here for once the tables are reversed, and the Jew turns into a racial snob. The Jews, steeped in the tragic experience of persecution, who of all peoples should know its sting and its horror, have at last returned to their old home, Zion. They have established a community and a democratic regime. So far, all is well. There are, as you know, about ten Arabs to every Jew in Palestine. The proportion is about that of the Negro to the white in this country, the Jews standing for the Negro. What should we think of a situation in the United States in which the white population had to submit to a government dominated by the Negro? Now look at Palestine! In the "democratic" organization of the new Jewish state, the Arab is outvoted and ruled against his will by the Jewish people, with the assistance of foreign British police. This is the situation in Palestine. Of course, those enthusiastic about Palestine say that all of this will change in the future. The fact that Zion has been established, they claim, will stimulate a great many rich Jews all over the world to furnish funds in order that others might go there, and then there will ultimately be more Jews in Palestine than Arabs, and a truly democratic rule will be realized.

All this may be so, but meanwhile we have before us the little-edifying picture of a state ruled by Jews, heretofore victims of race prejudice, over the heads of the majority of the local population.

Nor is this all. Some years ago I had a conversation with a gentleman who came from Palestine, where he had been an inspector of



schools. As he was proceeding with his story, I noticed something strange in his attitude towards the Arabs. I asked: "You do not mean to say that you teach the children in your schools that the Arabs represent an inferior race?" "Oh, no," he replied, "we do not have to tell them that. They can see it for themselves." So there we are! Those same Arabs who centuries ago brought many elements of what we today prize as our civilization with them to Spain, the very same Arabs, because today they are in a state of cultural decay, are regarded by the Jews as inferior, as a primitive race.

Can these attitudes, so humiliating to our dignity, be eradicated? To my mind there is only one thing that can save mankind from prejudices of this sort. Whether it can be achieved through education or not I do not know. But in my experience I find that those people among us who by temperament or incidentally to their occupations are individualists are much less addicted to this kind of prejudice. Take, for example, the artists and actors; you will find that everywhere artists, as a group, are on the whole less given to anti-racial prejudice or any other kind of group discrimination than, perhaps, any other class of people, much less so than, let us say, scientists as a group. Why should this be so? You see, the occupation of the artist is intensely individualistic. He appreciates talent for talent's sake; every individual to him means just so much, to whatever group or nation he may belong. The same attitude, in a less pronounced degree, is observable in the relations of people other than artists towards artists. I think a lesson can be gleaned from this and other similar examples: prejudice, racial prejudice, is a social, a group phenomenon. Being rooted in tradition, it is inculcated into us, unconsciously, early in life, before we know what is happening. And we cannot rid ourselves of it unless we become, to a great extent, individualists, independent thinkers and personalities, immune against group infection. And even then, with rare exceptions, we merely become *aware* of our prejudices, possibly critical towards them, but not really capable of throwing them off altogether.

To repeat, then: Whether it is possible to really eradicate prejudice by education I do not know. But if it can be achieved at all, education seems the only way. And by education here I do not mean mass education of adults, but the education of children, at home and in school. We have good reasons to believe that children as such are not prejudiced. The task of the educator, then, lies not in imparting to children attitudes foreign to their make-up, but in immuring them against in-

fection by adults, in their later contacts. This, as you will see, is not easy. The question is: is it possible?

Our other great problem is the problem of the Asiatic. It has not loomed very large as yet, but it is becoming more and more menacing, and those of you who are reading the press notices from the West may begin to feel that it is gaining in importance, is dawning as a problem. Well, I realize that to the Nordicized Anglo-Saxons to whom the Nordics are *the* one great race, the very idea of miscegenation with undersized, yellowish, straight-haired, perhaps slant-eyed Mongolians must seem a horrible nightmare. I am quite sure that this conception constitutes the backbone of the racial resistance against blood mixture in the West.

I am not now referring to the economic opposition to Mongolians in California. This is, of course, a problem which has been with us for years. Whether California Labour is right or wrong about the danger of Japanese invasion, it is at least easy to understand its attitude. If only we could separate national policy from state policy in such matters! I, for one, would favour a hands-off policy with reference to California: go ahead and do as you please, settle your own affairs; do not permit the Japanese to land in your state if such is your pleasure. It is unfortunate that under our system a policy of this sort in one state drives us into a national policy, with its grave future possibilities.

But the more important problem is the general attitude towards a Mongolian "invasion." From my standpoint, there is no danger whatsoever of such an invasion's doing any harm. We need not intermarry with Mongolians, but no harm will result if we do. I do not say that it will be a particularly successful breed if we intermarry with them. As between race and race, I do not believe in successful breeds any more than I do in unsuccessful ones.

A story is told about the mixture of Chinese with African Negroes in the mining districts of South Africa. The resulting breed, we are informed, possesses unusual stamina; in particular, it furnishes excellent miners. But may we not suspect that the latter fact, if true, has another more plausible explanation?

From an economic standpoint, the fear of invasion is equally unreasonable. The idea that the Chinese and Japanese, with their low standard of living, are in a position to underbid and will ultimately drive out American labour, takes in only half of the facts. For is not the low standard of living a temporary condition artificially prolonged by hostility towards the Asiatics, which fosters clannishness among

them and induces them to persist in their old mode of living? Is it not perfectly obvious that were the Asiatics permitted to mix on terms of equality with the American population, one of the first things that would happen would be a rise in their standard of living?

Finally we come to the third problem, that of European immigration. A few words will suffice here. The issue is, of course, somewhat different. Without exercising any imaginative efforts, we know that each and all of our European brethren have, at one time or another, produced great civilizations. As to psychological tests, in the light of which so many of the foreign arrivals appear inferior to native Americans, let me say this:

Suppose that, for one reason or another, there were a flood of emigration from America to France, Italy, or Germany. Suppose further that these peoples applied tests to pass on "green" Americans similar to those we use with our immigrants. Do you imagine that the relative position of the different nationalities on the intelligence scale would remain unchanged?

The mathematical and statistical methods constitute in and by themselves a great advance in our ways of dealing with phenomena. But there is also this to be said: when one is talking nonsense and puts it in plain words, why, there is no harm done, for it is easy to discount the statement; but if one is talking nonsense and expresses it in mathematical formulæ, there is danger that the respectable mathematical garb may save the underlying nonsense from detection. This has direct application to the psychological tests. As we saw, these tests are as yet in an experimental stage. We do not by any means know just what they mean. This being the case, the parade of exactitude becomes a menace, especially when issues of human concern are in the balance. We are satisfied to pass on other Americans on the basis of their general performance in life. Why this sudden concern about science when dealing with foreigners?

The last problem I want to consider — painful though it may be — is the problem of the Jew. Is anti-Semitism a problem with us? Yes, there is anti-Semitism today in the United States, more of it today than there was yesterday, and, so far as we can see, there will be more tomorrow than there is today. Is it a problem? Well, a problem is something one can formulate, define more or less clearly, and investigate, with a view to alleviation or obliteration, if the problem involves an undesirable condition. None of these things can be done with anti-Semitism. We cannot even define it. The recent solemn discussion in

our journals impresses one as humorous. Everyone sees some other reason for anti-Semitism. Some consider it wholly a matter of religion, others claim that it is deeply and inevitably ingrained in the Christian teaching about the tragic crime of the Jews, still others believe that anti-Semitism is purely social. Then there are the many characteristics ascribed to Jews which are regarded as the sources of anti-Semitic feeling. If I were to offer an opinion, I should say that none of these alleged traits could possibly be the true source of anti-Semitism, because — and I trust there is no exaggeration in what I am about to say — if we were to enumerate and tabulate the traits ascribed to Jews by different people, the result would be a fairly complete enumeration of the traits of human kind, in somewhat exaggerated form. The Jew is a conglomerate of opposites. He is too rich and too poor, he dresses too well and too shabbily, he is self-assertive and yet too self-conscious and shy, too emotional and too dryly materialistic, too high-brow and too common, too imaginative and too cynical, and so on *ad infinitum*. Psychologically, the Jew has become an international scapegoat, a depository of common human traits carried to extremes.

Is it not patent that none of these quasi-Jewish traits lie at the root of anti-Semitism? They are mere rationalizations, self-exculpatory "good reasons" *ex post facto*. The psychological setting of anti-Semitism may, perhaps, be formulated as follows: the Jew has become a state of mind, backed by a tradition of anti-Semitism. You see, the attitude towards the Jew is not the same as that towards, say, the Negro. Anti-Semitism, while a species of racial prejudice, has ways of its own. The tradition of anti-Semitism is responsible for the fact that it has today those specific qualities it had yesterday and ages before.

Can one do anything about anti-Semitism? My personal view, I confess, is that nothing can be done. Once it is on the go, it will get worse whether one does anything about it or not. So I am not very optimistic about anti-Semitism in this country. It is in the ascendant and will continue to grow, for a time; anything we may write or say in justification of the Jew is merely adding so much oil to the fire. The only rational course, then, is to let anti-Semitism take its course, while we go about our duties and occupations and idealisms. I am not saying this, you will understand, because I approve of conditions as they are, but because it is my conviction that we are powerless to relieve them.

There is just one more problem that I want to mention. It will be the last. A great many people, realizing the horror and injustice of the

things I have been discussing, have come to the conclusion that civilization as such cannot be changed. Nor do they share our confidence in the possibilities of educational remedies. Thus minded, they are looking for relief in other quarters. I have reference to "eugenics," based on the idea that our troubles come from inferior heredity and that an artificial improvement of the human material might save and revive civilization. Many competent biologists have joined the ranks of the eugenicists. As a famous sociologist put it the other day: there is no use in troubling our minds about the hocus-pocus of education; eugenics is the thing, a rational system of "positive eugenics." Do you know what is meant by positive eugenics? Negative eugenics of course, means the elimination of the "unfit," criminal, degenerate, by sterilization or other such methods. Positive eugenics, on the other hand, means some such scheme as this: the selection of particularly promising human specimens, male and female, and the mating of such specimens under the supervision of a board of matrimonial experts. The anticipated result of such improvement in the human stock would be a corresponding enhancement of civilization.

I cannot here launch upon a criticism of eugenics, but I think you will realize how shaky is the foundation on which it rests, both as a theoretical conception and as a practical scheme.

Little though we may be able to achieve through education, as between education and eugenics let us have education every time. Man, as someone put it, does not need a change, but merely a chance. Whether he needs a change or not, at any rate we are powerless to change him; the only thing we can do, therefore — and that we must do most earnestly — is to give him a chance.

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## II

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Are the Races Potentially Equal?



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## II

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### Are the Races Potentially Equal?

(A Lecture)

**M**R. HALL HAS JUST REGALED US WITH DELIGHTFUL BITS OF Negro magic. There is no denying the interest and quaintness of the data he has presented. But what is the bearing of this folk-loristic panorama on the question of racial quality or ability? Is what we have heard something specifically Negro?

As an anthropologist Mr. Hall need not be told that even in the very field of magic he has so thoroughly scanned, modern man cannot by any means be granted a clean slate. We have heard of the supernatural powers attributed to Negro kings. But how about the kings of Europe — today (or shall we say yesterday)? Some two generations ago, when the Imperial train carrying Tsar Alexander III and the royal family was wrecked without Their Majesties suffering any injury, the event was hailed throughout Russia as a manifestation of divine Providence. Needless to say, the ruler of all the Russias lost no time in making capital of this special sign of supernatural favour. Or shall I remind you of William II, who made no secret of the belief that his ideas and acts were directly inspired by the Creator? Nor did he stand alone in this faith.

With us, moreover, as with the African Negroes, supernaturalism is not by any means restricted to royalty. Women no longer believe that the eating of a twin banana will result in a similar multiplication of offspring; but when about to become mothers, they still frequent concerts and libraries in the fond hope of thus imparting to their issue the qualities of musicianship and scholarliness. We may not see as many visions as was man's wont in earlier days, or when we do, we may discount them; but we still dream dreams and are tempted, at times, to ascribe to them the significance of omens and prognostications. Charms and amulets, mysteriously acting stones and the evil eye, symbolic numbers, lucky and unlucky days, mental action at a distance (and this is the very kernel of magic!), all these are still with us. . . .



But let us waive this issue and glance at the problem of racial comparability in somewhat more systematic fashion.

First, then, comes man physical or biological. Are the physical differences between the races such as to permit a grading into a progressive series from the animal upwards? The answer is a decisive no. When white man is examined as an integral specimen, his pale skin, his refinement of feature, his harmoniously symmetrical development, and, last but not least, his æsthetic appeal to our senses, seem to pre-judge the case in his favour. Surely no other race has reached a physical development so remote from the animal and otherwise so satisfactory, both anatomically and æsthetically!

But this approach is impressionistic. If, setting it aside, one examines man feature by feature, the conclusion can hardly be the same. Take, for instance, the red external lips, a trait distinctly human, for animals, even the highest, are devoid of it. No one can deny that in this particular feature the Negro race has travelled far ahead of the others and therefore furthest away from its animal prototype. Or take hairiness of the face and of the body generally. From the standpoint of this feature, the Negro, Mongol, and American Indian would justly claim a certificate of advanced humanity, for their hairiness, a trait characteristic of most animals, is but slight. The Australian, on the other hand, is in comparison quite animalistic, for he is very hairy indeed. In this, however, he resembles one other race: namely, white man, who is as hairy as the Australian.

And so on with other features. There is no possibility of a serial grading from animal to man as far as the actually existing races are concerned. The races must be regarded as specialized developments from the animal, proceeding in different directions.

Then there is man neurological and psychological. How does the case stand here? It is, of course, obvious that the general development of higher animals, culminating in man, is accompanied by a progressive increase in the relative weight and size of the nervous system and in particular of the brain. But when the level of humanity is once reached, the case is no longer so simple.

Many efforts have been made to prove that races other than the white are, on the whole, characterized by smaller and lighter brains. In the light of more careful study this position can no longer be sustained. In the only instance where sufficient data for a definitive conclusion are available, that of the Negro and the white, the situation is about as follows: The majority of Negro and white brains vary be-

tween the same limits of size and weight. A small number of white brains, however, are heavier and larger than any normal Negro brain, and an equally small number of Negro brains are smaller and lighter than any normal white man's brain. At first blush this seems impressive, but heed must be paid to an important complication. Do brain size and weight stand in a definite ratio to what is called intelligence? The popular view to the contrary notwithstanding, this question must be answered in the negative. It seems that within the limits of variation of the human species practically any degree of intelligence is compatible with any normal brain size and weight. In other words, speaking of the white race alone, a thousand intellectually distinguished individuals would in their brain size and weight be comparable to a thousand average persons. It follows that no conclusion inimical to the Negro race can be based on the above noted slight discrepancy.

There is, of course, the further question of brain convolutions, which are in some way related to brain organization and mental performance. But this aspect of the subject is so replete with questions asked and unanswered that no conclusion can be hazarded by the unprejudiced.

Then come the sense reactions and psychological processes generally. In this realm the notion is still prevalent that the so-called primitive peoples are distinguished by sensory acuity, but by a relatively inferior development of the higher mental faculties. Both characteristics are, of course, interpreted in a sense inimical to the primitives. To put it bluntly: the primitives cannot think as well as we do, but they can hear, smell, and see better, just as some animals do.

But all this belongs to opinion, not to balanced objective judgment. Neither psychological tests nor our general experience with primitives reveal, when critically evaluated, any superiority to the sensory acuity of white man. It is true that in primitive conditions man lives in close contact with nature, and that in this setting he often learns to make better use of his senses than does white man in his highly artificial civilization. But all this is a matter of habituation through practice. The Australian bushman would fare no better at a street-crossing at noon than does a white man in the jungle!

As to other psychological traits, the consensus of opinion of unprejudiced mankind, among whom are some missionaries, travellers, and scientists, is to the effect that, for better or worse, man's mind works about the same the world over. Also, is it not fairly obvious that the psychological characteristics usually attributed to the races are, like

national traits, acquired, not congenital? The stolidity of the Indian, the reserve of the Mongol, the emotionalism of the Negro, are in no way more inherent than the vindictiveness of the Italian, the logic of the French, the pedantry of the German, the sentimentality of the Russian, the denseness of the English, or the frankness of the American. Each and all, these traits, in so far as they exist, are cultural, acquired by education, and subject to change when social environment changes.

In regard to the races this gives no assurance of their psychological identity. The opposite is, in fact, probable. That the marked physical differentiation of the races should not have been accompanied by some corresponding psychological differentiation is hard to suppose. Some day when we are better informed about these matters, we may yet discover the psychological equivalent of race. It would, however, be gratuitous to assume that such insight would enable us to classify the races as higher and lower in psychic aptitude.

I realize that all this may impress you as unduly detached and academic. What do we care, I am hearing you say, about lips and hairiness, heavy and light brains, sensory acuity and psychological characteristics! Our concern is with civilization and history. White man's historical career, and only his, has been steadily progressive; he alone has achieved a genuine civilization, beside which the cultural vagaries of other races dwindle into insignificance.

This sounds good and to a degree carries conviction — until examined in a dispassionate mood. For is it so certain, after all, that our civilization, point by point, is superior to all others?

In certain domains, yes. We know more — this is science. We have learned to apply knowledge to life — this is applied science. Also, we are able, at times, to control thought by knowledge — this is scientific theory and philosophy. In these domains, indubitably, we reign supreme. But can as much be said about our religion, ethics, art, or sociopolitical organization? No sooner is this issue broached than it becomes at once apparent that no conclusion can be reached here without postulating some standards of reference. This, as a rule, is done unconsciously when, taking our own standards for granted, we envisage the achievements of other civilizations or races in the light of these standards. But then others must be granted the right to proceed similarly, which indeed they often do, with results entirely satisfactory to themselves.

Is monotheism, for example, superior to pantheism or to a universal

animism? It all depends. If conformity with a world view is accepted as the standard, then, from the angle of a pluralistic philosophy, animism may well appear as an ideal form of supernaturalism. For does it not spiritualize and deify the particular? Monism, in comparison, would pass as a product of a futile and vacuous abstractionism. Or take morality: if to be moral is to live a code of behaviour, not merely to profess one, then most primitive folk and some others, less remote, would easily rank above us in moral stamina. As to art, a rattle from the north-west coast of America or a Polynesian club are, within their range, as perfect examples of art as a portrait from the brush of Raphael, a statue of Rodin's, or a Gothic cathedral.

We might also remember that modern civilization in its most distinctive elements — that is, knowledge with its theoretical and practical applications — dates, as it were, from yesterday. In positive knowledge we are almost as superior to the ancients, Greek or Roman, as we are to African Negroes and Australian bushmen. In the mechanical aspects of living — means of production, transportation, communication — there is more difference between the man of today and one of the eighteenth century than there was between the latter and his forebears of the prairie and the forest.

In a fortunate moment of history a set of striking inventions resulted in a unique spurt in knowledge and consequent achievements. The culture thus brought into being, while not wholly admirable, does, in more than one way, represent an unprecedented advance upon the past. But to assume that such a forward push could occur in no other race or culture but the white would be siding with gratuitous assumption and prejudice rather than with probability.

As I speak, I am becoming painfully aware that some of you may suspect me of making a rather naïve assumption, the assumption, namely, that the problem of racial equality revolves about fact, knowledge, critical thinking. Before closing, permit me to defend myself against this unmerited suspicion. I am only too conscious that this is not so, that race problems are the province of garbled facts, special pleading, prejudice, conceit, jealousy, and selfishness. To recognize this is perhaps the first step towards a more rational and humane attitude.

Remember Japan! A generation ago the Japanese stood no higher in the estimation of their white brethren than the Chinese stand today. Then came the Russo-Japanese War. The Russian eagle was forced to eat dust at the feet of its yellow conquerors. And out of the ashes

of the war Japan arose a full-fledged member of the family of nations. If today we still discriminate against the Japanese—and, to our shame be it said, we do—it is no longer on the ground of racial inferiority.

The lesson of this historical episode is well worth the learning. What happened once may happen again. To satisfy her imperialistic ambitions, France is at this time engaged in providing military training for vast numbers of her African subjects. These troops or those that will follow in their wake, may not always remain satisfied to lay their bones on the battlefields of Europe in the interests of a foreign and selfish power. Some day they may become the nucleus of an Africa for the Africans, armed vanguard in the struggle of the black world for racial emancipation.

The fate that befell Russia at the hands of the yellow men of Asia may befall others when confronted with the black legions of Africa. Then we shall recognize them. Then we shall grant them the right to world citizenship.

But must they wait so long? Must we? Remember there is a price to pay for the delay.

Might it not be fairer as well as wiser to proceed more expeditiously?

*PART SIX*

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VARIORA



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# I

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## Man and Woman as Creators





## Man and Woman as Creators

**A** HEN IS NO BIRD; A WOMAN — NO HUMAN," SAYS A RUSSIAN proverb. In this drastic formulation stands written the history of centuries. Woman's claim to "human"-ness was at times accepted, with reservations; at other times it was boldly challenged; and even today, when woman's legal, social, economic, and political disabilities have been largely removed, woman's acceptance in society as man's equal remains dependent on a definition of the "equal."

Like the mental capacity of races, the question of woman's intellectual status was never judged on its merits. Rather, it was accepted as a practical social postulate, then rationalized into the likeness of an inductive conclusion. The problem seems so replete with temptations for special pleading that a thoroughly impartial attitude becomes well-nigh impossible. However, let us attempt it!

Is woman psychologically identical with man? Or, if there is a difference, is it one of superiority and inferiority? And of what practical significance is this issue to society?

Two ways of approach are open: either subject men and women to psychological tests; or observe performance in life and, exercising due critical care, infer capacity.

Both methods have been tried. The first enjoys today a certain vogue; it is the method of science, of experimental psychology. Unfortunately, the findings of science in this field have to date resulted in precisely nothing. It was feasible to assume that woman was man's equal in elementary sensory capacity, in memory, types and varieties of associations, attention, sensitiveness to pain, heat, and cold, etc. Experimental psychology has confirmed these assumptions. But what of it? What can we make of it? Precisely nothing. What we are interested in is whether woman can think "as logically" as man, whether she is more intuitive, more emotional, less imaginative, more practical, less honest, more sensitive, a better judge of human nature. The higher and more complex mental functions have so far eluded the scientist.

They cannot even be broached by experimental psychology "within the present state of our knowledge."

Remains the second method: to observe performance and infer capacity.

To examine in this fashion all the relevant issues would require a portly monograph. I select only one, creativeness. Is woman man's equal in creativeness? The choice is justified by the highly controversial character of the issue as well as its practical bearings.

Two periods in the history of civilization lend themselves admirably for our purpose, the primitive and the modern.

The primitive world was not innocent of discrimination against woman. In social and political leadership, in the ownership and disposition of property, in religion and ceremonialism, woman was subjected to more or less drastic restrictions. It would therefore be obviously unfair to expect her creativeness in these fields to have equalled or even approximated that of man. Not so in industry and art, where division of labour prevailed, but no sex disability. As one surveys the technical and artistic pursuits of primitive tribes, woman's participation is everywhere in evidence. The baskets of California, the painted pots of the Pueblos, the beaded embroideries of the Plains, the famous Chilkat blankets, the tapa cloth of Polynesia, all of these were woman's handiwork. Almost everywhere she plans and cuts and sews and decorates the garments worn by women as well as men. Also, in all primitive communities she gathers the wild products of vegetation and transforms them into palatable or at least eatable food, by methods originated, we must assume, by her or her sex mates. More than this, in societies that know not the plough, woman is, with few exceptions, the agriculturist. It follows that the observations, skills, techniques, and inventions involved in these pursuits must also be credited to woman.

It will be conceded that in primitive society woman's record is impressive: wherever she is permitted to apply her creativeness she makes good, and the excellence of her achievement is equal to that of man, certainly not conspicuously inferior to his.

In evaluating these findings, however, it is important to take cognizance of the submergence of individual initiative by the tribal pattern, a feature characteristic of primitive life. This applies to men and women, to artisans and artists. Imaginative flights are kept within narrow bounds by traditional norms. As a consequence, the individualism and subjectivism of modern art are here conspicuous by their absence.

How does this record compare with a survey of the modern period?

Here again woman's disabilities in the social, political, and religious realms were, for a long time, so marked that creative participation was impossible. The same is true of architecture. But there are other fields: philosophy, mathematics, science, and sculpture, painting, literature, music, and the drama. In philosophy and mathematics there is no woman in the ranks of supreme excellence. Even Sophia Kovalevsky, though talented, was not among the foremost mathematicians. Similarly in science, where women have done fine things, none are found among the brightest luminaries. It must be added, moreover, that the few women who have made their mark in the scientific field, notably Mme Curie, have done so in the laboratory, not in the more abstract and imaginative domain of theoretical science.

At this point some may protest that the period during which women have had a chance to test their talents in philosophy, mathematics, and science is too short, their number too small, and that here once more performance cannot fairly be used as a measure of possible achievement. We must heed this protest.

It seems to me that in the fields of sculpture, painting, literature, music, and the drama, woman's past disabilities can no longer be held accountable for whatever her performance may be found to be. Women artists, musicians, writers, and, of course, actresses, have been with us for a long time. Their number is large and on the increase. Whether married or single, they devote their energies to these pursuits quite unhampered by social taboos. There are in this field no taboos against women. In the United States, in fact, these occupations are held to be more suitable for women than for men.

But what do we find?

In painting and sculpture no women among the best, although considerable numbers among the second-best and below. There is no woman Rodin or Meunier or Klinger or Renoir or Picasso.<sup>1</sup>

In literature the case for woman stands better. Here women have performed wonderfully, in both poetry and prose. If they have fallen short, it is only of supreme achievement.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Notable, in this connexion, is the case of the artistic Renaissance in fifteenth-century Italy. There women were on a par with men, in education, social status, scholarship, literary taste. But there are no feminine names among the creative Olympians of the period!

<sup>2</sup> We need not mention a Dante, Shakspeare, Cervantes, or Milton. Perhaps these are too far back. Not so Tolstoi, Dostoyevski, Turgenev, Goethe, Heine, Balzac, Maupassant, the Goncourts, Flaubert, Byron, Browning, Shelley, Emerson, Walt Whitman. Where are their equals among women? And coming down to the modern period, when literature is flooded with feminine figures, is there one who can be placed beside Ibsen or Anatole France or d'Annunzio or Proust? The feminine names that might be cited in comparison are obvious enough, but would any of

Finally we come to music and the stage. The case of music is admirably suited for our purpose, is really a perfect test case. What do we find? As performers, where minor creativeness suffices, women have equalled the best among men. As composers, where creativeness of the highest order is essential, they have failed. We have a Carreño or Novaes to match a Hoffmann or Levitzki, a Melba or Sembrich to match a Caruso or de Reszke, a Morini or Powell or Parlow to match a Heifetz or Elman or Kreisler; but there is no woman to match a Beethoven or Wagner or Strauss or Mahler or Stravinski; or Rachmaninoff, a composer performer.

The situation in drama is almost equally illuminating. Here women have reached the top; have done it so frequently and persistently, in fact, as to challenge men, some think successfully so. But as dramatic writers the few women who have tried have never succeeded in rising above moderate excellence. A Rachel or Duse can hold her own as against a Possart or Orlenyev, a Bernhardt looms as high as an Irving, Booth, or Salvini; but there is no woman to compare with a Molière or Ostrovski or Rostand or Hauptmann or Chekhov or Kapek.

If now we glance once more at the primitive record, the conclusion suggested by this analysis of music and the drama is greatly reinforced. Whenever opportunity was given her, primitive woman equalled man in creativeness; in modern society she has uniformly failed in the highest ranges. The results are not incompatible. As indicated before, in early days cultural conditions precluded the exercise of creativeness except on a minor scale, in modern society major creativeness is possible and has been realized. Woman's creative achievement reaches the top when the top is relatively low; when the top itself rises, she falls behind.

To analyse this fact further is no easy task. We may not assume, as some do, that the difference between major and minor creativeness lies in degrees of rationality. This is certainly erroneous. The true creator is what he is, not because of his rationality, but because of what he does with it. The differentia, as I see them, are two: boldness of imagination and tremendous concentration on self. The creator,

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them measure up to these—quite? However, let me mention Katherine Mansfield, Edith Wharton, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Rebecca West. And I may add Sheila Kaye-Smith, Selma Lagerlöf, Marguerite Audou, Sigrid Undset, Virginia Woolf.

I realize, of course, that such comparisons, except in a most sweeping statement, are invidious. A better picture could be obtained by juxtaposing, one to one, writers of similar type and literary form—but this is a task for a volume, not an essay.

when he creates, is spiritually alone; he dominates his material by drawing it into the self, while permitting his imagination, for once torn off the moorings of tradition and precedent, to indulge in flights of gigantic sweep. Imagination — not rationality — and personality exalted to the *n*th power, are the marks of the highest creativeness.

In the possession of these traits, then, as here understood, woman is somehow restricted. She has them, of course, and exercises them, but not on the very highest level.

We might stop right here, but it is hard to suppress at least a tentative interpretation.

If the personality-imagination complex is where woman fails at the top, then it becomes *a priori* probable that this difference between man and woman constitutes a remote sex characteristic. And if this is so, then it may prove worth our while to look for a corresponding difference on a level more directly connected with sex life. No sooner is this done than a difference does indeed appear, and it meets our expectations, for it lies in the direction of personality, or self-concentration, and imagination. Woman is never so much "a part of" as when she loves, man never so "whole"; her self dissolves, his crystallizes. Also, woman's love is less imaginative than man's: man is more like what woman's love makes him out to be than woman is like what man's love makes her out to be. Relatively speaking, his love is romantic, hers realistic.

This difference in the diagnostic features of man's love and woman's love confirms our suspicion that the discrepancy in performance, where the personality-imagination complex is involved, constitutes a remote sex characteristic.

We must now turn once more to woman's achievement in the different fields of cultural creativeness, for the variation in the degree of excellence reached by her provides a valuable clue as to where her strength lies. In an ascending series of woman's achievements musical composition is at the bottom of the list; then come sculpture and painting, then literature (with a drop in dramatic writing), then instrumental and vocal performance; acting, finally, heads the list.

This order is illuminating. The relative excellence of woman's achievement is seen to rise with the concreteness of the task and the prominence of the technical and human elements. Creativeness is more abstract in music than in the plastic and graphic arts, more abstract in these than in literature; and in each case woman's relative achievement increases as abstractness decreases. Even the drop in dramatic

writing when compared with other forms of literature is explicable in terms of a more abstract sort of creativeness required by the formal elements of dramatic art. Again, the high position in the list of musical performers and actresses must in part be ascribed to the importance of the technical element in these arts. The pre-eminence of the musical performers is probably entirely due to this factor, although the intrusion of the human element (performing for an audience) may also have a share in the result.

In acting, the human element is the most important factor, for here there is not only an audience to act to, but the human content of the acting itself. The human orientation also accounts for the relatively high position of literature in the list when compared to sculpture and painting and to musical composition. Finally, the creativeness of musical performance and acting—two fields in which woman excels—is concrete when compared to that of literature, the arts, and musical composition. Incidentally, a sidelight is thus thrown on the case of science, where woman's relative pre-eminence is found in the concrete and technical domain of the laboratory.

The preceding analysis leads to the conclusion that woman's strength lies in the concrete as contrasted with the abstract, the technical as contrasted with the ideational, the human as contrasted with the universal and detached. This conclusion, it may be of interest to note, harmonizes perfectly with the general consensus of mankind, as expressed in lay opinion and the judgments of literary men. "Literary psychology" may be unreliable, but it need not always be wrong.

To summarize: in all fields of cultural activity opened to her, woman has shown creative ability, but since cultural conditions have made major creativeness possible, she has failed, in comparison with man, in the highest levels of abstract creativeness. The abstract, ideational, and universal seem to fall somewhat outside the range of woman's psychic disposition. She does, on the other hand, show a proclivity in the direction of the concrete, technical, and human. Creativeness is imagination plus self-concentration. Falling short of the highest achievements in creativeness, woman displays an analogous orientation in the psycho-sexual sphere—here she is realistic rather than romantic, self-abnegatory rather than self-concentrated. It would seem, then, that her restricted performance in creativeness represents one aspect of her psycho-sexual organization.

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## II

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Is Freud a Psychologist?





### Is Freud a Psychologist?

**T**O ASK WHETHER FREUD IS A PSYCHOLOGIST SEEMS, AT FIRST blush, a presumption. As well one might ask whether Darwin was a biologist, or Kant a philosopher. But a bit of analysis may alter the perspective.

Before the advent of psychoanalysis, there were two kinds of psychology, that of the common man, and that of the scientist, a psychology of the street, and a psychology of the laboratory. Popular psychology was immersed in the daily preoccupations of men and women; it dealt with personalities, characters, dispositions. It described people as intelligent or stupid, mean or kind, gifted or commonplace. It spoke of talents, geniuses, leaders of men, keen observers, born naturalists or inventors. It loved to dwell on the peculiarities of national traits. Also, it always dealt with the whole man, the whole woman. Its syntheses were realistic and pragmatic, its analyses allowed for no exceptions or inaccuracies. Its conclusions, generally, were categorical, sweeping and dogmatic.

Popular psychologizing was raised to an exalted status by the realistic novelists and dramatists. Men like Chekhov, Balzac, Maupassant, Tolstoi, Shakspeare and Molière, Ibsen and Dostoyevski, Galsworthy, Maugham, and Proust, used the psychology of the street, of the common man; but whereas the average man employed in his operations pick and shovel, hammer and saw, these great seers of the human psyche wielded refined surgical instruments and polished tools, the painter's brush, the sculptor's thumb. Their vision had clarity and precision; their expression, fitness and charm. Their conclusions, though startling at times, were comprehensible to the lay reader. They belonged to his universe of discourse. They dealt with the living men and women in whom we are all concerned.

Scientific psychology was quite differently oriented. Whether in abstract analytical procedure or on the graphs of the laboratory, it dealt with the human mind, not as a whole, but in parts. It dismem-

bered familiar realities into fragments of abstraction which bore no resemblance at all to the things of flesh and spirit in which the common man was interested. Sensations, perceptions, sensory illusions, after-images, memories, amnesias, associations, two-dimensional or three-dimensional vision, cutaneous sensitivity to pain, heat, or cold, blind spots, functions of the sympathetic nervous system, and innumerable other topics, were as uninteresting to the layman as they were incomprehensible to him. Just as grammar, the backbone of language, always seemed stupid and dry except to grammarians, so scientific psychology, though aglow with adventure to the initiated, brought to the average man nothing but cryptic formulæ and high-sounding propositions. Technically accurate they may well be, he thought, but also empty and useless.

All this changed with the advent of the so-called "new psychology," in the form of behaviourism and psychoanalysis. However different in technique and perspective, these two systems had this in common: they dealt with the whole man, their concern was with the humanity familiar to ordinary human beings. The "conditioned reflex" and the "complex," though new as terms, provided a link between lay experience and scientific technique. With remarkable rapidity these concepts were made its own by the untutored mind. Therein lies the secret of the extraordinary popularity of these two aspects of the new psychology. For once, scientific psychology had come down to earth, and as such it was welcomed. Behaviourism in its modern form took its inception in the animal laboratories of the Russian, Pavlov; it was picked up in America by the dynamic John B. Watson, whose personal initiative and ability were largely responsible for the present vogue of psychological behaviourism. The behaviourist, building on the foundations laid by such experimentalists as Fechner, Weber, and Wundt in Germany, or Cattell, Titchener, and Stanley Hall in the United States, refused to accept as data anything but objectively observable and measurable phenomena. He was less interested in the psychological process as such than in the organism, human or otherwise, in which the process took place. Choosing as his province organisms in function, the behaviourist attempted to reduce our knowledge of such functions to a form comparable to the findings of the exact and natural sciences. In the old introspective psychology the behaviourist saw his principal enemy and a menace to psychology as a science. Grudgingly he admitted that a mind did exist, but for scientific purposes it was available only in so far as its operations as part of an organism were ob-

servable under controlled conditions, recorded in objective form and measured with exactitude.

In his distrust of subjectivism the behaviourist joined hands with the psychoanalyst. Psychoanalysis was born in the seances of the hypnotist and the clinic of the psychiatrist. Sigmund Freud, a Viennese physician who had turned his attention to psychic disorders, found the then prevalent system of hypnotic treatment inadequate in various directions. He substituted for it a procedure in which the patient, instead of being reduced to a will-less tool of the physician, was on the contrary urged to permit his mind to function freely, unencumbered even by the checks of habitual criticism and selection. This so-called method of "free association," to which dream analysis was subsequently added, became the operative tool of the psychoanalyst.

As mentioned before, the psychoanalyst was at one with the behaviourist in his distrust of the conscious mind. In introspection psychoanalysis and behaviourism found their common foe. But having thus met in friendly compact, they presently parted company, never to meet again. The behaviourist stepped outside the mind, as it were — the good old-fashioned mind of the common man and the analytical psychologist — and devoted his attention to muscular movements which could be graphically recorded, measured, and reduced to figures. The psychoanalyst, on the other hand, dug deeper into the psychic soil, to discover there another mind, the unconscious, the operations of which had heretofore been unknown to the layman and barely suspected by the scientist.

The psychological system of the psychoanalyst, meaning primarily Freud, may be reduced in its principle features to the following propositions:

The conscious mind represents but a surface phenomenon of psychic life. It is but a fragmentary and distorted replica of the unconscious mind, which operates with great coherence and consistency, subject to as rigid laws of causal determination as are the events of the material universe. Nothing is accidental in the psychic domain. Its apparent incoherence or freedom is merely due to our ignorance of the deeper-lying connexions. Once these are understood, the mystery and casualness of psychic life vanish, and it begins to assume the form of a well-ordered and strictly deterministic system.

The unconscious itself is populated by psychic urges, originally conscious, which come into conflict with certain attitudes, taboos, and regulations brought by civilization and imparted to the individual in

education. In the ensuing test of strength the original urges lose out, to be forthwith repressed into the unconscious. They do not, however, cease to exist. On the contrary, they remain active and dynamic and continue to influence the life and reactions of the individual. In this they are most successful just because their very existence remains unknown to the person who harbours them. These unconscious processes display a marked resistance to being once more pulled into the domain of the conscious mind, this resistance being the greater, the more thoroughgoing the preceding repression.

Analysis has disclosed, moreover, that the repressed urges of the unconscious are mostly or wholly sexual in nature. In this connexion Freud introduced a conception of sex wider and more fundamental than that current before his day. The essence of sexuality to him was not in the sexual act, with ensuing conception and subsequent procreation, but in the sexual urge itself, the sexual excitation. This extension of the concept of sex made it possible for Freud to cover by the term not only the phenomena of the normal bisexual life, but also the so-called perversities, such as homosexuality, sadism, masochism, and fetishism. A further extension, finally, embraced also the sexual phenomena of childhood — nay, of infancy. Thus the infant, heretofore regarded as an asexual creature, a symbol of angel-like innocence, stood revealed as not only sexed but “polymorphous perverse,” in so far as homosexual, sadistic, masochistic, and other tendencies were combined in its make-up.

When this early sexual period is left behind, there comes a more or less extended period of amnesia or forgetting during which the sex urges and experiences of early childhood are largely repressed. When the child emerges from this condition, during or somewhat preceding puberty, its sexual orientation has become different. It is no longer perverse or polymorphous. From now on, it is dominated by the *Œdipus complex*, which consists in a positive fixation towards the parent of the opposite sex and an ambivalent attitude towards the parent of the same sex, an attitude which combines a negative and a positive element. Thus, to put it briefly and inaccurately, the boy loves the mother, and both hates and loves the father (*Œdipus complex*); whereas the girl loves the father and hates and loves the mother (*Electra complex*). These “complexes” are, in normal instances, resolved after adolescence, the boy often substituting his sister or sisters for the mother, before his love or libido becomes attached to other women, while the girl passes via brothers to other men.

If all goes well with the individual, "normal" sexual life begins at this point. In case of difficulties, however, into which we need not enter here, conflicts arise, of which the nature or even the very existence may for long remain unknown to the person in question, for the reason that at least one of the conflicting elements remains in the unconscious. Then we say that a person is afflicted with a "complex," and the time is ripe to consult a psychoanalyst, with whose assistance the conflicting elements in the unconscious are raised into consciousness, blind spots of memory are illumined, the complex, if all goes well, is resolved, and the patient is cured, temporarily or permanently.

In addition to the method of free association, the psychoanalyst uses in his technique still another method, that of dream analysis. Dreams, Freud teaches, are not as simple as they seem, nor as chaotic, nor as meaningless. Dream life, like that of the waking hours, proceeds in two levels: the dream of actual sleeping experience, which is the manifest content of the dream, and the dream thought or work, the dream's latent content. The significant part of the dream lies in the latter process. The repressed urges in the unconscious, which during waking hours are prevented by resistance from reaching consciousness, succeed in doing so after the control elements of the mind have been weakened during sleep. It is then that the wishes or urges of the unconscious, always present, but held back during waking hours, appear in the manifest content of the dream in the form of wish fulfilments and in a setting largely made up of some experiences of the preceding day. These visitors from the mental underworld appear in the manifest dream, however, not in their pristine form — the resistance is too great even then — but in a disguise. They take the form of symbols, which constitute a large part of the manifest content of the dream. In order to interpret the dream, therefore, it is necessary to understand the language of symbols. In the interpretation of symbols considerable differences of opinion exist between psychoanalysts. Some hold that certain things or events always appear in the form of certain fixed symbols, while others grant symbols greater leeway.

It now becomes clear how dream analysis can assist the psychoanalyst in his therapeutic technique. It helps him and the patient to pull the veil from certain elements of the unconscious which are held back so powerfully by resistance as not to appear in consciousness during waking hours, even though the patient may be eager enough to co-operate with the analyst in inducing these elements to make their

appearance. An avenue of approach is thus opened to the hidden wishes of the patient, which often lie at the root of his disorder. These wishes, urges, fears, are likely to make their appearance in the dream life of the patient, because during the period of analysis it is just these matters that concern him and torture him.

Not satisfied to trace neuroses to repressed sexuality, Freud and other psychoanalysts believe that certain positive and outstanding elements of psychic life, such as extraordinary creativeness in art, music, religion, or any other form of imaginative activity, also represent sexual repressions of childhood, sublimated in such cases in a positive and productive direction.

Such, in brief, are the main tenets of the Freudian psychology.

This being so, one may well ask, how can the status of a psychologist be denied to Freud? Has he not raised psychology from a state of vagueness and conjecture to that of definiteness and positive knowledge? Has he not illumined heretofore unknown or misunderstood elements of the psyche? Has he not originated a psychological technique by means of which men and women, otherwise hopelessly lost, may be returned to the joys and activities of normal existence? Finally — and, from the standpoint of the layman, most important of all — has he not, first among professional psychologists, turned his attention to living humanity, to the men and women of actual life, rather than lose himself in elaborate but unilluminating analyses and meaningless abstractions?

Yes, all this may be so. To a large extent it is. And yet, in senses more than one, Freud is not, strictly speaking, a psychologist. Both what he does and what he does not do support this contention. The failings and exaggerations of his system, moreover, are largely due to the fact that it is not rooted in a systematic and comprehensive exploration of the mind. The Freudian mechanisms do exist, and perhaps they operate as he describes. For the purposes of this article, in fact, we may assume that these mechanisms are strictly true to reality and that their operations are accurately represented by Freud. But at this point two questions arise. Is it justifiable to transfer the mechanisms which explain neuroses to the mind of the normal individual? To a degree, no doubt, it is. Following the modern trend in psychiatry generally, as well as in medicine, criminology, and, ultimately, biology, we shall not draw too sharp a line between the normal and the abnormal, between health and disease. It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that while the transitions are gradual, the extremes are

marked enough, in disease, abnormality, crime. So also in Freud's chosen field. While Freudian mechanisms may be common property of us all, they are in control only in the neurotic. To put it differently: the mind behaves the more true to Freudian pattern, the more truly a neurotic an individual is.

In committing this error Freud has strayed, after the fashion of many psychiatrists and of physicians generally, who are naturally tempted to envisage the individual from the angle of pathology with which they are especially familiar, a temptation not easily nor frequently resisted.

One of the reasons why Freud was likely to fall into this error lies in the fact, crucial for us, that much of what belongs to the domain of psychology has never concerned Freud. Sensations, perceptions, the mechanisms of vision or the other sensory organs, including illusions, such things as after-images, or even the processes of memory or association, the psychic mechanisms of learning, the nature of creativeness, the analysis, finally, of such traits of character as kindness, meanness, temper, magnanimity, courage — none of these topics, or others like them, have ever formed part of Freud's subject-matter or figured in his theoretical workshop. If a pre-Freudian psychologist had written a text leaving out these topics, we might have asked with some surprise: "Where are the remaining chapters? Are they coming in another volume?" Surely we should have been justified in expecting some treatment of topics which form so essential a part of psychology. In the case of Freud, what he gave proved so exciting and astounding that little attention was paid to what he had neglected. And it is this neglect that raises the doubt as to his status as a true psychologist.

What Freud has really done is to discover a number of highly important mechanisms, some of which had not previously been known or were but imperfectly understood. These mechanisms, Freud found, functioned typically in the neurotic mind. Prompted by the common enough desire to generalize his findings, thus giving them greater universality, he proceeded to apply his mechanisms to the normal mind. In this, as we saw, he was to a degree justified. But he was so concerned with his own mechanisms as to be blinded to the fact that, however significant they might prove to be on occasion, they constituted, after all, but a small corner on the general map of psychic life.

Another aspect of Freud's system which reflects upon his status as a psychologist is the undue simplification which he introduced into his



interpretation of the mind by having it lean so heavily upon sex. However important sex may be, a reduction of psychology, or any part of it, to sexology cannot be undertaken unless specific proof is provided that the sex urge, admittedly prominent in a wide range of psychic processes, also constitutes their exclusive source or root. It is, moreover, not for those who dispute Freud's position to furnish evidence, for such is amply provided by ordinary human experience. The burden of proof rests on those who claim that the plurality of experience is at bottom a unity, and that the unity centres in sex. There may be common elements between the religious and æsthetic functions and the sexual ones; we do, in fact, know that such common elements exist. But it does not follow therefrom that the religious sense or the sense of beauty are to be treated as genetic or ontogenetic derivatives of the sex urge. Nor is it sufficient to make such an assumption plausible. That, indeed, is easy enough, for the simple is, as such, plausible as well as attractive. If the assumption is to be taken seriously, it must be demonstrated. This has never been done, or even attempted.

In Freud's treatment of sex life itself, there is a similar tendency towards excessive simplification. Paradoxically enough, Freud does not seem to give due weight to the so-called normal sexual tendencies of most men and women past adolescence. To him this tendency is but the last phase in the evolution of sex in the individual, beginning with the early sex gropings of the infant and normally ending with post-adolescent bisexuality. Now, it is not at all clear that this is actually so. As is well known, the sex organs of man, male and female, reach their maturity just preceding or during adolescence. At the very same period certain psychic mutations take place in the organism of a boy, and especially of a girl, which are popularly characterized by the phrases: "he has become a man," "she has become a woman." Now, is it not at least permissible to assume that these psychological tendencies are as congenital as the physical changes they accompany, but that both are timed to appear, not at birth nor in infancy or childhood, but at the period roughly described as puberty? By way of analogy, take, for example, milk-teeth and second teeth. There is nothing in the milk-teeth that would make one suspect that second teeth are to appear there, and obviously enough the second teeth do not evolve from milk-teeth. Both milk-teeth and second teeth are congenital, but the first are timed to appear early in life, the second considerably later.

Here, then, we have once more a simplification without proof,

which reminds one of the mode of procedure in the theoretical natural sciences, like physics or chemistry; with the difference that there simplification is justified if it renders our conceptual universe in the particular domain more simple and coherent. Psychologists, like historians, have at length learned to resist this tendency towards simplification. Most of them have come to realize the fact that what they are confronted with is a bit of psychic reality, every element of which clings to its independent right to existence, unwilling to be submerged in a comprehensive unifying formula, however intellectually attractive. So here, it seems, Freud once more functions not as a psychologist.

Freud's concept of unconscious mind, finally, both in itself and in its relation to the mind of consciousness, is subject to a similar stricture.

First, Freud over-emphasizes the unconscious at the expense of the conscious. With the concept of the unconscious, as such, we need have no quarrel. It is most helpful in our thinking about psychic life, nor is it even particularly new. The ungodly fear, moreover, which some psychologists and philosophers have of it may have reasons of its own (Freudian or otherwise). But to grasp the significance of the unconscious and apply it as an interpretation of the conscious is one thing, to explain away the conscious is another. In his zeal to explain the conscious mind and reduce it to some sort of order, Freud has spirited it away. The only way to understand the conscious mind, it would seem, is to follow the guide-posts it provides to the unconscious, and there understanding will be found. Now, this is obviously a highly artificial and unrealistic procedure. The conscious may be all wrong, it may be nothing but illusion, but it has one undeniable characteristic: *it is*. This Freud seems to forget. The conscious mind, after all, constitutes a reality. It may not be *the* reality, but it is *a* reality: the reality of the life of awareness. If there are in it contradictions, incomprehensibilities, lapses, tensions, illusions — such is psychic reality, experience, life. We are fully justified in attempting an interpretation of this conscious mind in terms of something that lies beyond it, but this is only one way of approaching it. The other way — and it is a way which preserves its autonomy, the autonomy of life as consciously lived — is to remain in the level of the conscious mind and do with it what we can, for better or worse. A psychologist who sacrifices the mind of experience to a mind of conjecture — psychic, if you please, but conjectural — is, after all, a psychologist who has strayed from his primary subject-matter.

The psychic nature of Freud's unconscious, finally, is of a somewhat dubious kind. We are, to be sure, reminded frequently enough, by Freud and others, that the unconscious is psychic, also that it must be assumed to be such if the autonomy of the psychic level is to be preserved: psychological explanations must be in psychic terms, the unconscious is but a subterranean extension of the conscious, the conscious and the unconscious are a continuum. So far, so good. But, on analysis, the unconscious — Freud's submerged psyche — does not operate like a psyche at all. It is most orderly, coherent, and deterministic, whereas the mind of awareness is casual, chaotic, and somewhat disjointed. The unconscious knows no conflicts, no contradictions, the very traits which characterize the conscious mind. The psychoanalyst has baptized the unconscious as psychic. But if we try to classify the unconscious in accordance with its traits, gleaned from Freud's works, the result is very different. We then find it behaving much like blind organic substance, if not like that other substance — equally blind, and not even organic — which, at bottom, is the substance of the cosmos. It may, therefore, not be wholly accidental that Jung, Freud's renegade disciple, in an attempt to widen the concept of the unconscious still further, has given it a form lacking even the external signs of the psychic which may, perhaps, be discerned in the unconscious of Freud. Jung's unconscious may still be organic, but it is certainly no longer psychic; not so far, at least, as one can gather from any use made of it in Jung's system.

Freud's psychologism thus seems to be but a mechanism in disguise. The unconscious, which is the dynamic and operative principle of the Freudian system, even though it be called psychic, functions as if it were part of the inanimate cosmos. When we remember that physicians are prone to be mechanists, and that, until recently, this was true of psychiatrists, this feature of the Freudian ideology seems to receive its proper historical setting. The youthful Freud was a physician, trained in the techniques and concepts of the physiological laboratory. When his attention was attracted to psychic disorders, he attacked them with the preconceptions of a natural scientist endowed with a constructive and speculative intellect. He soon found himself on the track of a number of significant mechanisms, which he proceeded to use not merely as postulates in his therapeutic technique, but also as corner-stones for a new psychological philosophy. This philosophy, now fully developed and forming a closed system, proves, on analysis, to be simplicist, mechanical, and deterministic. It thus

possesses all the characteristics of the speculative constructs of theoretical physics (of the nineteenth century, let me add). Freud may call it psychic, but it differs in all fundamentals from the nature of the psychic, of conscious mind, revealed to us in the awarenesses of experience.

In this way the unpsychological background and presuppositions of Freud's system can be seen to account both for the content and the lacunæ of his contribution. Being primarily interested, not in mind, but in morbid personality, Freud left unexplored the larger part of the psychologist's domain. Misled by the physician's bias, he permitted his pathology to run amuck. Obsessed by the sex concept, he was prevented from giving a more penetrating psychological evaluation of other urges, such as the religious or the æsthetic. The psychological differentials of diverse sexual orientations were obliterated in his sweeping sex formula, patterned after the general concepts of the natural sciences. The concept of the unconscious, finally, though born of the intent to save psychic autonomy, bears the earmarks, not of psychology, but of physics, not of mind, but of mechanism. In this sense, then, Freud is not, strictly speaking, a psychologist.



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### III

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Civilization as Some School-children See It



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### III

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## Civilization as Some School-children See It<sup>1</sup>

TEACHER: What is it that makes civilization worth while?

BORIS: Improvement.

VIVIAN: Government also helps civilization.

HERBERT: The Indians are hardier than us, therefore they don't need a civilization with houses, trolly-cars. Therefore their civilization is as good to them as ours is to us.

HOPE: A perfect civilization is when everybody is satisfied.

BORIS: But there will always be someone who is unhappy about something.

GEORGE: Civilization would not be a civilization without anybody being unhappy.

TEACHER: I want to settle this matter — civilization as being different from what we find among animals. What is it that the animal can never have?

FRED: Machinery.

VIVIAN: They haven't the power we have.

TEACHER: How do you know they haven't the power? Where do we get our civilization today? Where do the children get their civilization?

VIVIAN: Education.

TEACHER: What do they give you in education?

BORIS: Knowledge, past knowledge.

TEACHER: Children are born into civilization, always. Inheritance of acquired characteristics does not exist.<sup>2</sup> They do not bring

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<sup>1</sup> This piece represents a stenographic account of a class hour with my Walden School children ("people"). The eight girls and seven boys, to whom I lectured once a week on anthropology and other topics, were twelve and thirteen years old.

<sup>2</sup> Yes, they knew what I was talking about! Kammerer happened to be in New York at the time. At the next hour one of my pupils brought a clipping from a newspaper in which his views (very different from mine) were explained. I was subjected to animated heckling. Finally I won them over to my view—for the time being.



civilization with them. They get civilization from their parents, teachers, society. Do animals get anything like that?

NINA: We took that up last time. You said they could.

TEACHER: Certainly, to a slight extent parents, among animals, teach their children a little. As with birds, the parents help the little ones to learn to fly. On the other hand, this element among animals is relatively negligible, for there is no traditional knowledge that is passed on. We call this history. Human civilization is history. A great deal is passed on from one generation to another. That is what animals, we might say, do not have. Remember this, the main characteristic of human civilization, that which makes civilization possible, is that we pass it on from generation to generation. That is the main distinction between animal and human society.

HERBERT: The mother birds teach their young birds to fly.

LAURENCE: The wood-duck doesn't teach its babies to fly! They throw it in the water and it swims.

TEACHER: The animal comes right into the world ready made. We come into the world very free from knowledge, which we later acquire. Civilization accumulates.

HERBERT: There is a tribe in Ceylon. They have a vocabulary of two hundred words. They have no shelter or clothes. Just think of the orchard oriole, who is supposed to build the best nest. Now who has the better civilization? The birds have more happiness than these men.

TEACHER: You mean they have more comfort.

NINA: But comfort counts a lot.

TEACHER: Sometimes we say that the best civilization is that which gives the most happiness. Let me ask this question: do we really all want to be happy? Would a worth-while civilization be one that would make us happy?

BORIS: What about war?

NINA: We can't get along without war.

VIVIAN: We would not have a civilization if everybody was happy. That's what makes civilization. We experience things by our unhappiness. [*In this and following remarks Vivian reveals a fine comprehension of the cultural worth of dissatisfaction.*]

TEACHER: That's the point! Would there be a change if everybody were happy?

VIVIAN: That's why we improve.

TEACHER: If everyone were happy, it might be a paradise, but it would not be a human civilization.

BORIS: No one can say that. If we never had it, how can you suppose such a thing? [*This remark is typical of Boris. A convinced realist, to him all speculative statements are repugnant.*]

HOPE: We would not be happy unless we had a perfect civilization. You could not get everybody happy if you look at the slums and the way they have to work. The poor can't be happy, they work too hard. If they worked less, then money wouldn't count so much.

BORIS: You can't say these people would be happy, no such thing has ever happened.

TEACHER: However, we can after all argue about things we haven't seen before. What is the reason why we want to change from one condition to another?

VIVIAN: We're not satisfied.

TEACHER: Suppose you enjoyed your dinner and enjoyed it more and more as you went on. Would you stop? If you were perfectly happy all the time, would you stop? You would change your condition as soon as you began to feel uncomfortable.

NINA: Of course, civilization comes through experience.

TEACHER: What sort of experience teaches us?

NINA: Unhappy experience.

BORIS: So many of the hundreds of inventions people want to improve.

TEACHER: Why do they want to improve inventions? Suppose a thing works very well, but it is too expensive. Why do you want to make it cheaper? Because someone who is selling it is not making enough money on it. Does anyone suffer from that? There is quite a difference between making more money and less money. Let me ask this question: is there anything nice in unhappiness?

GEORGE: It depends upon who it is. Some people like it because they get sympathy. [*Characteristic of George. He has a humorous turn of mind, often makes the class roar and the teacher feel uncomfortable.*]

TEACHER: This is a very important thing. It has often been said, we all want to be happy, and civilization is not the right civilization if everyone is not happy. Do we want to eliminate unhappiness altogether?

NINA: Not altogether.

TEACHER: Suppose there are parents and they have children and they care for their children. The children grow up and become independent. They go to college in another city or get married and leave the homes of their parents. Can you imagine that every time this happens, every time the children go away, it will not cause the parents any grief, any suffering? In human civilization it always happens that children grow up and then leave their homes. Do you not think that it will always be hard?

NINA: Sometimes it isn't hard, when the children are bad.

TEACHER: The parents are most anxious about the child that treats them the worst, even though the child may be very bad. And whenever a child goes away, there is always grief. Do you want to improve upon this?

NINA: Of course not.

TEACHER: Suppose parents did not grieve—in some respects it would not be quite human. This is quite important. There is nothing to this idea that there should be only happiness. I knew a man once who was very healthy. He was a very optimistic man of about forty at the time I knew him. He never had a headache; he never worried about anything; he was very happy. Yet I always felt chilly in the presence of this man, because I could not imagine how a man could be so indifferent to all trouble. I felt that this man was selfish. We do appreciate a certain amount of unhappiness, and unless we do suffer, we feel that we are not quite human. I think it will always be that way. Do you all feel this way?

NINA: But is it right that you should always be sad?

HOPE: I don't think you have any right to try to make this man feel sad.

TEACHER: That is quite different. I do not say you should deliberately inflict suffering on others.

NINA: He may do that just for the help of others.

LAURENCE: If I go out in the park, and a street boy comes over to me and says: "I will beat you up if you don't give me that thing." What right has he to take it from me?

TEACHER: What other things, besides a reasonable amount of happiness, do you think make this civilization worth while?

GEORGE: Movies.

TEACHER: What do movies represent?

VIVIAN: It is meant to represent a lot.

TEACHER: What do movies represent to those who go?

ALL: Pleasure. Work.

TEACHER: What do you think about work?

VIVIAN: If we had no work, we could not have any civilization either.

NINA: If we didn't work, we could not have pleasure either. Pleasure is made by work. [*Nina is recognized by the other children as their intellectual leader. When a text-book of anthropology was planned by the children, to be written by themselves, Nina was made editor.*]

TEACHER: Let me ask this question: do you think there is too little or too much work in our civilization?

ALL: Too much.

VIVIAN: Too much on some and too little on others. The labourers work too hard.

TEACHER: How about the brain worker — don't you think he works too hard? What do you think about this matter of work?

NINA: The men who do manual labour work harder.

TEACHER: Is work necessary in itself?

BORIS: You have to do work, and it is better to like it rather than not like it.

HOPE: Work is necessary for the progress of the world.

TEACHER: When you say that a certain amount of work is necessary for the progress of the world, you assume that if it were not necessary, we should not have to work.

NINA: No, many people couldn't get along without work.

TEACHER: Do you have pleasure if you continue working? Speaking about the individual, suppose you work two hours, three hours, four hours — will you enjoy it?

VIVIAN: The fact that you have pleasure after work makes it so much more worth while.

HOPE: It depends upon the person who is working.

TEACHER: I think you all agree that work, on the one hand, is necessary, but, on the other hand, there is pleasure in work, a moderate amount of work. I should say that one of the troubles of our modern civilization today is that we have too much work. There is too much work. Work in itself is pleasurable for a while, but not after it continues a long while.

What else is there outside of work?

VIVIAN: Rest.

TEACHER: Yes. What are some other things you would care to do instead of going to movies?

ALL: Study nature. Read.

TEACHER: What else can you do?

ALL: Sleep.

HOPE: Study the history of the world. [*Laugh.*]

GEORGE: That's what she calls rest!

TEACHER: People generally do not do very much of that. What about thinking? Do you think very much? [*To Fred*]: Tell us what sort of things you think of.

FRED: Things that I plan to do in the future and things that I have done in the past.

TEACHER: Is this the only sort of things you think about? What other things?

FRED: Other things?

TEACHER: You do just plain thinking, not very much effort, but a sort of reverie. Sometimes you put two and two together and get five.

GEORGE: They usually do that in an insane asylum.

TEACHER: There is one important thing. When you have stopped work, you have time to relax and think. There was a great English philosopher, Herbert Spencer. About a generation ago this man came to our country and made a speech. One thing he told the Americans in that speech was that there was not enough relaxation; we are working too hard; in the business of making a living we forget about life; there is too much strain in life and not enough relaxation. How much relaxation is there in primitive civilization and how much in modern civilization? Is there not something we might learn from primitive civilization? There is too much strain in life; not enough rest and just letting our minds wander.

Let us repeat our conclusions so far: civilization is historical; it is accumulated from one generation to another. We all strive for happiness, but, being human, we have the capacity of being unhappy. Then there is the idea of work and the idea of pleasure. Is there anything else? People say that men are rational beings and have the capacity to think rationally; they ought to think that way as much as possible. Would it be nice if we could all think straight, logically? Would it be nice if we thought that way all the time?

NINA: No, of course not.

TEACHER: What else do we like to do with our minds?

NINA: Imagine. [*Note, in this and the next few answers, how*

*clearly Nina realizes the nature of the creative function of mind as distinguished from critical thought.]*

TEACHER: Yes.

NINA: Creating things.

TEACHER: Creating, is that the same as thinking logically?

NINA: You don't create an answer to your problems. You create out of your own mind.

TEACHER: How do you create something in your mind? You have —

NINA: To imagine. You either have to talk it, paint it, or play it. [*The creative work of the Walden School is summarized in this sentence.*]

TEACHER: Do you think it out in any sort of logical way?

MOST OF THE CLASS: No.

TEACHER: Then we have imagination, creativeness. What do you all enjoy?

FRED: Music.

TEACHER: Yes. Can you not make your answer more purely psychological?

NINA: Is your brain always working?

TEACHER: When you get through with your tasks, what do you do?

ALL: Play.

TEACHER: Animals play and human beings play. We have less time to play, but we enjoy it just as much. Play is very important. You see, a great many elements enter into civilization.

GEORGE: Would you call play civilization?

TEACHER: Anything else in civilization that is very important?

LAURENCE: How about work?

TEACHER: We spoke about work.

NINA: Self-government. Self-control.

TEACHER: What does government mean?

BORIS: To be able to control yourself.

TEACHER: You have the individual, and in addition you have — what?

NINA: Many others. Then there has to be a man to control these men.

TEACHER: Yes, in addition to the individual, there is society, and you say it must be controlled. Why can't the individual just be individual?

BORIS: Because they are not intelligent.

TEACHER: Suppose they are intelligent.

VIVIAN: When you progress, there is always someone left behind.

NINA: There are some who progress and some who can't.

TEACHER: Suppose you are an artist and just concern yourself with what artists do. Do you interfere with other artists at all in what you paint? The better work you do and the more work you do, and the more individual, original it is, the better for the other artists in the community. How about science? Do you interfere with others?

NINA: No.

BORIS: What do you mean by interfering?

TEACHER: Not to impinge upon the rights of others, not to impede their work, their creativeness. As a scientist, as an artist, no matter what you do, you do not interfere. You learn, you assimilate, you create, but you do not interfere. How about earning a living, or accumulating money or property? Do you interfere with others if you control a great deal of property?

BORIS: Yes.

TEACHER: Do you step on anybody's toes?

BORIS: Suppose America wants to take Germany, you're stepping on their toes.

TEACHER: Yes. When it comes to art, science, philosophy, literature, you can just follow your own desires and imagination; the more, the better; but as soon as you come to accumulation of property or to social things or to political things, in connexion with voting or controlling the government, and as soon as you express yourself through these channels, you begin to step on other people's toes. Most of the trouble in the world comes from these things. An individual has the right to express himself fully in art, science, and so on, but when it comes to economic, political, and social things and he begins to express himself unreservedly, he steps on other people's toes. Therefore society must restrict the individual.

HERBERT: Didn't you vote yesterday so that you might be able to step on other people's toes?

NINA: That's what you're supposed to do.

TEACHER: Why do you vote at all?

NINA: It's your choice.

VIVIAN: In order that you can be controlled.

TEACHER: What do you achieve by voting for a person?

VIVIAN: Then the public has a voice.

TEACHER: The fact that we vote shows that we want someone to control us. I think it will be worth while to think about this last point a little bit. To what extent is it desirable that the individual should express himself, create, think, and in what way is it desirable that the individual should be controlled by society, and why?

I told you a few things about the Indian and primitive peoples generally. Do you imagine that the individual is controlled less or more in primitive society than in modern society? Just think before you answer.

SOME: Less.

OTHERS: More.

NINA: They are controlled so much by superstition.

TEACHER: You saw the Eskimo picture. Did you get any idea from this picture in what way they are controlled?

NINA: By hardships.

VIVIAN: They don't seem to have any opinions. They seem to all copy their leader.

BORIS: You can't do anything against the government. You are ruled.

NINA: You can.

BORIS: Well, you're put in jail.

TEACHER: The Eskimos are controlled by environmental conditions, and a great deal of effort and time is spent in that. Primitives are also controlled by leaders and public opinion. The question is, does the individual Eskimo know that practically everything he thinks and does is just what his father thought and did?

VIVIAN: He does not think about it.

TEACHER: Yes. Just it! He does not think about it. They do not think about it and do not know it. How do they feel?

VIVIAN: Contented.

TEACHER: We are, today, much less controlled than primitive man. We are less controlled, but we kick more.

GEORGE: Because there is more to kick about.

TEACHER: We are more conscious about it. We have become more individualistic. We want to express ourselves. So we resent the pressure of society. Has that any bearing on the other point we are discussing?

LAURENCE: The Indians are much more advanced than the Eskimos.

HERBERT: I bet there are some Indians who harpoon seals.



NINA: The Eskimo may be able to harpoon seals, but the Indian can harpoon deer.

HERBERT: The Indians do both.

NINA: The Indians in California do both. [*Individual encounters, such as this, are most common. Thus the children use up their excess energy.*]

TEACHER: In addition to thinking about this other matter, about the individual and society, will you please put down for the next time, very briefly on one sheet of paper, the things we were discussing today and give a few very brief illustrations. What are the elements of civilization? What is civilization? What are the things in civilization that are important and necessary? Suppose you speak about work, mention why you consider work important and give some concrete examples.

Next Wednesday, I think, we shall continue a little further with the American Indian. [*Exclamations and shouts of joy.*]

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## IV

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### The New Education



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## IV

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### The New Education

( A Lecture )

EDUCATION WAS NOT ALWAYS A PROBLEM. A LONG TIME AGO, in primitive society, there was no problem of education. People in those days lived in small communities which were rather isolated; communication then was hazardous and irregular. Each group, moreover, was also cut off from much of its own past; people lived by memory alone, and memory, we know, does not reach very far back. In such societies conservatism reigns, as may be gathered from similar examples of geographical and historical isolation occurring in modern conditions. Also, wherever written records are not available, the people who have lived longest, the old men and women, are the ones who are in the lead; it is to them that the young turn for information, advice, and guidance. And the old stick to the old; they are, as a group, conservative.

In those days, then, society lived by the past. Tradition, usage, determined the content and form of life; there was little thought of the future, and next to no progress. In such a society education was no problem. In the absence of a school, the home was the only place where the individual received education. And the home, the family, was but a faithful reflection of the larger society. So the young boys and girls were railroaded into the social tradition long before they had reached maturity. Past culture came to them unconsciously. While still in their teens, and without being aware of it, they came to participate in the ideals and ideas of their group. The task of education was simple, and it was accomplished admirably. Through education society perpetuated itself; further it did not care to go.

This was a long time ago. By and by society changed. Civilization changed. It became more complex. The demands upon it became more varied. Conflicts began to arise between the claims of individuals and the expectations of society. The individual, pulled hither and thither

by the stresses and strains of a quickened life, shook off some of the traditional baggage. He learned to hear and see for himself, to observe, to compare, to evaluate. Possibilities of improvement and progress began to dawn upon the reflecting mind. The demands upon education were different now. But for a long time it did not respond. Throughout antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the modern era, up to most recent years, education remained, by and large, what it had always been: a school of past usage.

At last, only yesterday as it were, the new social orientation found its educational expression in the experimental school. Housed in a small building, with few teachers and not too many children, with little administration and less red tape, and with vision and courage rather than resources, the new school has within recent years sprung up in every country of the Western world.

I taught in an experimental school for three years, one two-hour session a week for eight months of the year. Rather than offer you a systematic exposition of the principles and methods of these schools, let me describe in brief and somewhat personal terms what might be called the catechism of the experimental school.

In the experimental school the *child is a person* — not a potential person, in preparation for adulthood, but a person. What this person can do when allowed to express itself freely may be seen in the marvellous art produced by experimental children, a true art, but as different from adult art as it is from the so-called children's art of the past.

Also, *the child is a genius*. What I mean is that an adult cut after the pattern of a child would be regarded as a genius. Give an adult the eagerness, the dead earnestness, the capacity for observation, the restless search for new things, the willingness to ask questions, the intense concentration, of a normal child, and you have a genius. Only extraordinary individuals in their later years possess the qualities which belong to every ordinary child, as a child. The ordinary child is not only a person, but an extraordinary person. The experimental school realizes this and adjusts its methods and procedures to the seemingly extravagant demands of the child when taken on its merits.

Again, *education is for the child*. This might seem trite, but as we survey the education of the past, and even that of the present, we find that while most parents would grant that education is for the child, their behaviour often belies this principle. The child should be seen and not heard, we are told. Yet from the standpoint of the child this is a despicable doctrine. It is normal for the child to be noisy, to be heard,

emphatically. But it is hard on the adults; whence the adage. Our whole theory of punishment is built upon this misunderstanding. Spanking is good for the child, we teach. Yet a meticulous investigation of the facts has brought no evidence of the salutary effects of spanking, on the child. It is, however, good for the mother; she feels much relieved after having administered it. Spanking is a way of letting off steam for the mother. This is what I call education for the parent, not for the child. The experimental educator realizes this. So far as possible he tries to eliminate his own foibles as guides to educational practice. During working hours the new school is noisy. And it is dirty when the evening comes. In the class-room children sit about freely, in unrestrained postures; they interrupt the teacher whenever the spirit prompts them, and it usually does. All this is anathema to the conventional school — but children thrive on it.

Further, *knowledge is not thinking*. In the past an educated person was, first and foremost, one who knew many things. An educated person, we have often been told, is one who knows everything about something, and something about everything. This person is still with us; he is chock-full of all sorts of information, tucked away in his mind like wares in a warehouse. Filled to overflowing with the precious stuff of knowledge, such educated persons seem even to walk with care, for fear they might spill. Therefrom also the old grudge of the "low-brow" against the "high-brow": "These high-brow fellows," protests the low-brow, "have too much knowledge for their brains." To know is one thing, to think — another. And the experimental school knows it. It looks upon the mind of the child, not as a warehouse, but as a factory; not as a receptacle to store things in, but as a mechanism for transforming information into use. Take, for example, geography as it was once taught, at a certain time in the curriculum, without regard to the interests of the child or relation to other subjects, such as history or zoology. I remember how I studied my geography. I knew the rivers of Africa by heart — from east to west, but not the other way round. And I never learned to navigate those rivers! This old geography was just a temporary fixture in the minds of children: it came there, it disturbed them for a while, and then it left them where it found them. And when in later years they went to visit a foreign land, they knew nothing of its geography, nor did they care to find out.

The experimental school is different. It cares for the child more than for the curriculum, for the child's attitude towards knowledge

more than for its present stock of information. It realizes that thorough knowledge comes to one who is eager for it and knows when, where, and how to get it. It is the eagerness, then, that counts, as well as the "knowing how." In New York, for example, the experimental children start their geography with immigration, and they conduct veritable researches upon topics of interest to them (as, for instance, in my class of eleven- and twelve-year-olds: the Negro, labour, American Indian art). This at an age when public-school children are still studying their three "R's" (and the rest of the alphabet) by the rule of thumb!

Then again, in the experimental school *abstraction comes last*. You do not start with abstraction, but with life, people, animals, in the concrete. The child knows best what it can see, hear, touch, explore with its own hands. Life, moreover, is dynamic, whereas conventional education is largely static. The new school aspires to make education as dynamic as life itself. The class-rooms teem with "projects." The children not only execute but plan, and then execute what they have planned, if they can.

And, once more, *interest is half of achievement*; not interest in some remote future benefits — this is beyond the child's grasp — but interest now, at the time the information is acquired. This item often proves a great strain upon the teacher. He must, for example, answer questions as they come up during class. To defer the answer would be letting the psychological moment slide by. This requires great plasticity and patience on the part of the teacher. But, as I have said before, the experimental school is for the child. The teacher is but a tool. In view of the fact that experimental teachers to date have not had the benefit of an experimental education, they find their role in the school doubly difficult. Often they collapse under the strain. The experimental school pays a heavy price for the faults of its precursors.

*Discipline*, like all repression, *spells danger*. So the new school strives to reduce formal discipline to a minimum. In the way the children walk, sit, talk, address teachers, there is much more freedom and spontaneity than is possible in the conventional school. By which I do not mean that there is no discipline. When a teacher has gained the confidence of the children and has learned to hold their interest, discipline, within reasonable limits, follows as a consequence. There is also an automatic discipline, as it were, developed by the children themselves, as a group. Whenever I appeared in the class-room for my lecture, the children would jump up and greet me. There was con-

siderable noise for a time. Some would come down the aisles to shake hands with me. On one occasion when I entered, the usual welcome was not there. The children were working at something, intently, and my appearance failed to arouse the least response. Soon I discovered that they had been engaged upon one of the periodic psychological tests. In such emergencies these self-disciplined classes behave with the utmost decorum, nor is any external pressure required to achieve this result.

To the last item in the catechism of the experimental school I shall refer as "Teaching John Latin." In former days, in order to teach John Latin, the teacher had to know Latin. If he knew his Latin, he could, it was believed, teach it to John. During a later time people came to recognize that the teacher of Latin should also know John. Unless he also knew John, it was now held, his Latin would miscarry. In these days of the experimental school we still believe, contrary to some of our critics, that the Latin teacher must first of all know Latin. We also hold that he should know John. But besides he must know himself. A teacher cannot teach properly unless he is more at home with himself than were our teachers. Teachers must be familiar with psychology in general and their own minds in particular, else they will fail, almost inevitably, to do justice to the subject, the children, and, in the last analysis, themselves. To this I want to add that the mere knowledge of formal psychology, however thorough, is not enough. Over and above all else, what makes a good teacher is an intuitive psychic response to the children, their attitudes and sensibilities. This applies to the old school as well as the new, to the latter even more emphatically than the former. This intuitive quality in the teacher, moreover, cannot easily be taught or acquired, or so it seems. To put it differently, educational theory is one thing, good teaching another, at least in part.

Our next and final topic is the parents. And when we say "parents," we might more correctly say "one parent" — the mother. In more ways than one the education of children was always in the hands of women, of mothers. This is still true today, both in the home and in the experimental school. The vast majority of teachers and directors in the new schools are women.

For the new schools the co-operation of parents is a vital necessity. These schools rise far above modern society in their ideals, ideas, and performance. From society, therefore, they can only expect censure or, at best, skepticism. And this is what they get. Such an



attitude on the part of public opinion is one of the greatest obstacles faced by the new schools. Without the co-operation of parents, the experimental school is doomed. Fortunately, some parents are at least passively in sympathy with the school, and others, in increasing numbers, are helpful in more constructive ways. Personally I know many mothers who, while fearful and skeptical at first, are now supplementing the school work by an "experimental" attitude in the home; still others have joined the ranks of experimental teachers. We may, then, be reasonably hopeful for the future.

May I conclude by confessing that in my personal experience the experimental school in New York proved a real turning-point. The new school has enlisted my sympathy and enthusiasm, once and for all. Present society could leave no more precious heritage to the future, nor one more needed, than a new orientation in educational theory and practice.

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*AA: American Anthropologist*

*AAAM: Memoirs, American Anthropological Association*

*AAASc: American Association for the Advancement of Science*

*AAR: Annual Archæological Report*

*AJPs: American Journal of Psychology*

*AJS: American Journal of Sociology*

*AMNHAP: Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*

*AMNHB: Bulletin, American Museum of Natural History*

*AN: American Naturalist*

*ANA: Anthropology of North America*

*AR: Archiv für Religion*

*AS: L'Année sociologique*

*BA: Baessler-Archiv*

*BAASc: British Association for the Advancement of Science*

*BAER: Reports, Bureau of American Ethnology*

*BrA: Braun's Archiv*

*CAETS: Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*

*CASc: St. Louis Congress of Arts and Sciences*

*CLR: Columbia Law Review*

*DR: Dalhousie Review*

*DS: Le Devenir social*

*E: Ethnologica*

*EWR: Essays Presented to William Ridgeway*

*F: The Freeman*

*FMNHAS: Anthropological Series, Field Museum of Natural History*

*FR: Fortnightly Review*

*G: Globus*

*GE: La Grande Encyclopédie*

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<sup>1</sup> This list of books and articles comprises only titles mentioned in this volume.

*HAV: Holmes Anniversary Volume*

*HERE: Hastings's Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*

*HJ: Hibbert Journal*

*I: Imago*

*IAK: Internationaler Amerikanisten Kongress*

*ICA: International Congress of Americanists*

*IQ: International Quarterly*

*JAF: Journal of American Folk-Lore*

*JAI: Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*

*JNPE: Publications, Jesup North Pacific Expedition*

*JPh: The Journal of Philosophy*

*JRPs: Journal of Religious Psychology*

*KDG: Korrespondenzblatt der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie,  
Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*

*M: Man*

*MPhS: Manchester Philosophical Society*

*N: The Nation*

*NC: Nineteenth Century*

*NIE: New International Encyclopædia*

*NMDMS: Nervous and Mental Diseases Monograph Series*

*NQEB: Bulletin, North Queensland Ethnography*

*O: Oceania*

*PhS: Philosophische Studien*

*PsR: Psychological Review*

*PscR: Psychoanalytic Review*

*PScM: Popular Science Monthly*

*PScQ: Political Science Quarterly*

*RHR: Revue de l'histoire des religions*

*RJMF: Führer durch das Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, 1908*

*RLB: Bulletin, J. Ryland's Library*

*RSCT: Transactions, Royal Society of Canada*

*Sc: Science*

*SF: Social Forces*

*SHSWP: Proceedings, State Historical Society of Wisconsin*

*SIAR: Annual Report, Smithsonian Institution*

*SR: Sociological Review*

*TE: Anthropological Essays Presented to E. B. Tylor, 1907*

UCPAAE: *University of California Publications in American Archæology and Ethnology*

UCPH: *University of California Publications in History*

USNMP: *Proceedings, United States National Museum*

USNMR: *Reports, United States National Museum*

VMV: *Veröffentlichungen aus dem städtischen Völker-Museum, Frankfurt am Main*

WAV: *Westermarck Anniversary Volume*

ZE: *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*

ZVR: *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*

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## NOTE

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